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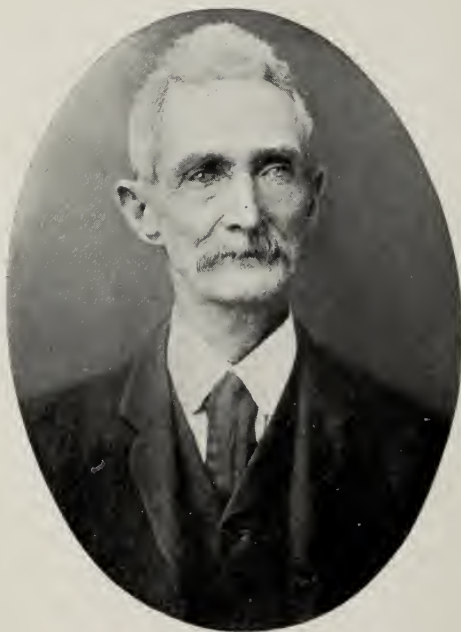
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F. M. CROSS

Blanket, Texas.

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A Short Sketch-History  
from Personal Reminiscences  
of Early Days in  
CENTRAL TEXAS

BY

F. M. CROSS

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## PREFACE

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Having been solicited by my many friends to write up a short Sketch-History of the early settling of the central part of Texas, I have decided to give the reader a brief account, mostly from my experiences, of the very earliest happenings in the territory now divided into the seven counties as follows: Milam, Bell, Coryell, Lampasas, Hamilton, Comanche and Brown.

This little book will give you some idea of the hardships the old pioneers had to bear with and the privations they underwent; it also tells something about the game that was found in the country, and the Indians and their depredations.

As I never thought of writing a book like this until very recently, and am doing it almost entirely from memory, I may possibly make a few mistakes with regard to names and dates, but should any occur they will be honest mistakes and will make little or no difference in substance.

Hoping that the following pages will give general satisfaction and prove of interest to those who may read them, I am,

Yours truly,  
F. M. CROSS,

THE LIBRARY  
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# A SHORT SKETCH-HISTORY

Containing an account of the settling of that portion of  
Central Texas comprising the counties of Milam,  
Bell, Coryell, Lampasas, Hamilton, Com-  
anche, and Brown.

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## MILAM COUNTY.

I was born in Pontotoc County Mississippi, in the year 1834. My father moved to the State of Missouri when I was but a child and from there came to Texas landing in the town of Cameron, in the fall of 1846. Cameron was the county seat of the most western organized county of that belt of country. The improvements of the town consisted of a court house made of clapboards a hut 14x16 feet in size; one dry goods store kept by C. N. Huby, and one grocery store run by Uncle Joel Blair, who died long ago in the town of Belton. I would guess the capital stock of those two stores combined would have amounted to \$600, though the supply was sufficient for the population at that time. The population of the town was C. N. Huby and family, Joel Blair and family, and one Mr. Iglebarger and family, who lived in a log cabin, and as people were passing by that way they got dinner with him, so his house was called the hotel. There was a family by the name of Stokes living a half mile from the store, who claimed citizenship in the town, and we were willing to recognize him as a city lad, for he had the only mill to grind meal for us all and every

man had to do his own grinding. It was a steel mill and run by physical power.

Those four families, with one Dr. Flemmin, who was a bachelor, constituted the population of the town until our arrival, which added four more families to it, to-wit: J. M. Cross and family, T. J. Nabors, wife and two children, Uncle James Blair and family, and one Mr. Trotter and wife. This man Trotter put up a shop and went to work, and being a fine gunsmith, was kept busy, as everybody had to have firearms in good condition in order to protect themselves from the red men.

When my father landed in Cameron he bought two lots and paid for them with a brace of pistols that cost him \$12.50 in Springfield, Missouri. On one of those lots he built a log cabin in which we lived during that winter and the spring of 1847. A great many emigrants came into this part of the State and located on the Brazos and Little Rivers, so my father, desiring to go a little farther to the front, sold those two lots for \$25, thinking he was doing well to double his money. The sheltering in the log cabin through the winter paid for the erecting of it, (but let me say just here that I was in Cameron about twenty years ago and the two lots with the frame buildings on them were worth three thousand dollars.) We went on up the Little River and stopped in what is known now as the John L. Marshall Valley, and there built another log cabin and planted a little corn crop on Knob Creek, near the Pilot Knobs, and made good corn

without any fence. We kept the buffalo run off through the day, there were no other stock nearer than the three forks of Little River, and they seldom came down there, so in the fall this crop was gathered and we moved nine miles above the three forks of Little River and settled on the Lampasas River, on what is now known as the old Shanklin Ranch, about 30 miles west of Cameron, which was still under the jurisdiction of Milam county.

I am just giving you a history of the sparsely settled wild country, as it was when I came to it. As to the wild game, there were buffalo, bear, deer, antelope and all kinds of smaller game from the lobo wolf down. The rivers were full of aligators and fish of all kinds. My father bought and settled four places in the country before Bell county was organized. During that time we had a little school one mile above the three forks of Little River, taught by Ed. Good, who has long ago gone to his reward. I will give the names of all the pupils of that school so far as I can recollect, that are still living, to-wit: W. B. Cross, now of Brown county; S. E. Wills of Bell county; Joel and W. B. Blair, and Mary Blair of Bell county; Mary Blair's maiden name was Roberts, and myself. These six are all that I can say are now living. Though from a short letter in the Belton paper, written five or six years ago by W. B. Blair, giving all the surviving ones, I think there must be a few others, if I could locate them.

When my father settled on the above named ranch, he and Uncle Jack Nabors were the extreme

frontier settlers on the Lampasas river. Below us, on the Leon river, there was a widow Taylor, living in what is still called the Taylor Valley. At the three forks of Little River was Mose Griffin, below him was the Fulcher Colony. Nat Shields, Jeff Reed and wife and William Reed; they were all in that immediate settlement. Just below the Reed Settlement were John Dunlap, John Earley, and Uncle Bob Childress, who died near Temple, several years ago. Still on down the river was old Major Bryant. That place was called Bryant's Fort, as it was a place of resort for the above named settlers in time of Indian trouble. On Dunaho Creek, in the southeastern part of Bell county lived an old man by the name of Wills—his given name has slipped my memory. He was the father of W. R. Wills, whose widow lives near Killeen. Also on this creek lived Uncle Billy Connell, the father of Geo. T. Connell of Brownwood.

Now as the emigration was coming in so fast we decided to organize a new county. I leave it with citizens of Milam county to figure up the difference between 1846 and 1910, and hope that some one there may write me at Blanket, Texas, giving an estimate of the population of your county at the date of this book.

As to the Indian troubles, I will not say anything about that, except when it may be necessary to speak of them in some particular incident, as the Wilbarger History of the Indian Depredations in Texas is so true that no man living can give it more correctly.



## BELL COUNTY.

After having spent two years in Milam County and its territory, the emigrants were coming in so fast, we thought it expedient to organize a new county. It is the above-named county we organized, to-wit: Bell County. It was joined by McLennan County on the North and Williamson on the South. These counties being already organized, their officials willingly came to our assistance in organizing this new county. Uncle Bill Reed was the first sheriff of Bell County, and Billy Stephens was the first magistrate. George Richards first County Clerk; Danley, first County Judge; and a man by the name of Bailies, the first District Judge. The taxes were assessed and collected by one man. I think that office was filled by Milt Dameron. I was a small boy at that time, and may have made some mistakes in naming those officials, but if so it is an honest mistake. The date of this organization I could not give without seeing some of the old records. I think it was Sam Bigham, who surveyed the county lines. The Jury Commission that located the town of Belton was composed of Joe Denis, Melvin Wilkerson, James Blair and my father, J. M. Cross. The first boards used in covering a roof in the town of Belton were made by one Simon Odell, W. B. Cross and myself. Odell was a man my father hired to assist in improving his place. These boards were to cover a shed for the Widow Loller, who was to board the hands who erected the first building in Belton.

The first mill put up for grinding corn in Bell County, was financed and erected by my father and Bob Childress. It was a little tub wheel water mill, on the spring branch, where the old Shanklin Mill was later built. I used to run that little mill. It would grind about twenty bushels of corn in a day, yet it was sufficient for the population then, for two days' run a week was sufficient for the entire country adjacent to it. They came as far as thirty miles to this mill for grinding. This place is spoken of before as the Shanklin Ranch, but my father sold it to Joel Blair, and it was then called the Joel Blair place, and while Blair lived there a man by the name of Supples put up a little store on the place, that was four miles South of Belton, on the Lampasas River. When the county site was located, John Pain bought Mr. Supples' stock of goods, and moved the little business over to the town, it was the first store in the town of Belton. The next was a log cabin grocery, run by Joe Tounsell the next business addition to the town was a store put up by a Mr. McCorkle, the father of Dr. McCorkle, who was killed at Killeen when that place was but a small village. In the settling of this country, I thought it was the grandest scenery I had ever looked upon in all my life. Up to that time it was one vast open prairie country, covered with green grass and decorated with beautiful flowers, and to add to the benefit of the new early settlers it was full of game of all kinds, buffalo, deer, bear, turkey and antelope. The streams were full of fish of all kinds. The first deer I killed was three miles South of where Belton now is. You may

imagine how great General Stonewall Jackson felt at the head of his army, but his greatness would have sunk into insignificance compared with my own, considering my feelings when I viewed that dead deer.

Shortly after my father moved to the territory of Bell County, some men he knew matched a wild race on some fine horses; stock that had been brought from the Old State. I was a ten year-old boy at the time and my father being somewhat of a sportsman, had trained me to ride races. I know this is no credit to me, though it is a fact. The race took place down on Little River near the old Fort Bryan, mentioned previously in this book. One of the parties, Nat Shields, asked my father to let me go down and train his horse about three weeks and ride the race for him. On the day the race was run Captain Ross of Waco and his little boy, Sullivan, were there, also John Harmon of Cameron; each of these men had brought a fine horse, running stock. They were short-distance horses and had a five hundred yard race to run the next week. Mr. Harmon asked me to go with him to Cameron and ride the race for him, which I did. Captain Ross came over from Waco the day before the race, bringing his horse and his rider, Sull Ross, his boy. The race track was one mile below Cameron on Little River at what was then called the Monro Tracks. On the day of the race everybody was there. The people would go as far to a horse-race those days as they will now days to a show of any kind. When we got on the race track the judges were arranged at each end of the tracks, and Sull

Ross and myself mounted the horses. Harmon had hold of the bridle just at this time, he gave me a dollar and said to me: "Tell that boy that you will bet him a dollar that you win the race." This he did to encourage me in putting the horse through "Alright," I said, and held up the dollar, and said: "Sull, I will bet you a dollar I get there first." By the time I had spoken the words Captain Ross handed his boy a dollar. We gave the money to old Uncle Willis Bruce to hold for the winner. I beat the race by twenty-seven feet. Here I can say I won the dollar off of a boy who in after years made one of the best Indian fighters Texas ever had. It was he, Sullivan Ross, that rescued Cynthia Ann Parker, a white woman captured by the Indians at the old Parker Fort. After the Civil War he served the people of Texas as Governor. Sull Ross, as he was always called, was a good friend of the writer and I am glad to hear of his honored life. He was the president of a High School in East Texas when called to his reward in the great beyond.

Finally we got to where we had to have a court house, and they built a clapboard house. about such a one as the house described in Cameron. The first murder case tried in that house, was Shadrick Howard who was charged with the killing of one Mr. Lanear. The tragedy occurred at or near a little mountain on the Lampasas river, a few miles above where Youngsfort was later located. After being in court about three years the defendant was acquitted.

The next murder case was that of Jas. Stilman, charged with killing one Mr. Alexander. The defendant was acquitted after a jail life of eighteen months. Those were all the criminal cases of any note that were tried while I was a boy.

Now my dear reader I will give you an idea of the disadvantages in building a town in those days. My father and Joe Dennis opened up a lumber yard and had their lumber hauled from Bastrop mills, twelve miles below the town of Bastrop, this lumber was freighted on ox-wagons and ye scribe drove one of those teams. The first trip was made by W. B. Blair and myself. This same W. B. Blair served Bell County as its Treasurer, for twenty years or more, in his later days. I made some trips after lumber on that lonely uninhabited trail without any companion except my four yoke of oxen and an old wood axle wagon, though the Indians were not as hostile then as in after years.

Now as the people of the old states began to emigrate to the new country, and towns began to grow, the government saw that the Lone Star State was determined to grow in spite of all opposition, and after defending ourselves with our own State Rangers for so long a time, Uncle Sam decided to send the old pioneers some protection. So the government sent a line of United States troops to Texas. One company was stationed at Fort Graham on the Brazos River, one on the Leon River 18 miles below where the town of Gatesville stands, and one company near the Colorado River, right where the town of Burnet is today. At that time, it was called



Fort Grogan. The Camp on the Leon River was called Fort Gates in that day and for a number of years afterwards. This line of stations was above all settlements at that time. At this time I was not yet grown, but drove a team in company with others, hauling forage from Little River and Diers Creek in the lower part of Bell County to the soldiers at Fort Gates. About this time there was a man by the name of O. T. Tyler, who lived in Washington County I think. I know it was in one of the lower counties. He had been up in this country and located a great deal of land. When Bell and Coryell Counties were located, this same O. T. Tyler contracted with my father and Uncle James Blair to sod 100 acres of land on Leon River, two miles above old Fort Gates, near Leon Junction. My older brother, R. Y. Cross, W. B. Cross and Joel Blair and myself were the boys who plowed the first furrows in Coryell County, though the County was not yet organized. I will state just here, that after the County began to settle up, O. T. Tyler built a house on this farm, and it was in that house that the Honorable George W. Tyler was born, who has since become one of the leading lawyers of the state.

Now having made mention of Senator Tyler, who was reared in Bell County, I will also give you the names of the first attorneys who practiced at the bar in Belton, to-wit: X. B. Sanders, one Mr. Flint and Captain Bradford. All noble young men. Judge Battle, of Waco, was the first District Attorney. X.

Sanders has crossed the Jordan of Death. Captain Bradford is yet in Belton. Flint and Battle I

cannot tell their whereabouts, they may be dead, but will say they were all high-toned, scholarly gentlemen. Flint and Sanders defended the first two cases tried in Belton, which have been spoken of before.

Let me give you an idea of how children were reared to man and womanhood in those days, and the disadvantages they had to contend with. The first sermon I ever heard in Texas was delivered by an old hard-shell Baptist by the name of Wheat, who has a great number of offspring yet living in Bell County. This discourse was delivered at my father's house, at night. I will never forget that sermon. there was an old lady there by the name of Perkins, who was a Methodist, and I being a small boy, was sitting close to the old lady. When the good brother got into an old-fashioned exhortation, the old lady sprang up slaping her hands and shouting at the top of her voice, I tell you reader it just simply scared all the fool out of me. I had never heard anything like it in all my life. At that time society as it is in this day was a stranger in that new country, but the few settlers of the new country began to build up society, and set to work to build a clap-board school house where the little store was; this, as before mentioned tioned was later moved to Belton. In this house we organized a Sunday School and soon secured a local preacher by the name of Cook to come and preach once a month. He was a Methodist. Then everything for the betterment of society seemed to be coming our way. This was the second school house built in the country. The next thing in order was a singing school. We engaged a man by the name of

Elliott to teach the school. It was taught by the old four-note system. After this we had a literary school taught by one Mr. Stickney. I say Mr. because the word professor had not been attached in that day. This man has been spoken of before, as the first County Judge. After his school was out, he got up a writing school at the same place. Now we began to think we were getting up into the pictures, and gaining fast in refinement, and while I was only a wild, rattling boy, I enjoyed the rapid progress of society. We soon became strong enough to organize a Methodist Conference. Our First Circuit Rider was one Rev. James Ferguson, who died long ago in the town of Salado. The first presiding Elder was Rev. Louis Whipple.

As the country was settling up so fast, it became expedient for the soldiers to be moved farther west of the line of stations already spoken of. I think it was in the year of 1850 that they were stationed on a line across the state from Red River to the Rio Grande. That line was called the overland mail road for a long time. At the time that line was established, I was about 18 years old, and starting out to do for myself, got employment with McCoy & Dalrymple, who had a contract with the government to furnish supplies for the soldiers on that line. We left the farm of Dalrymple near what is now known as the Leon Junction, with teams and wagons loaded with shelled corn, ranging from one hundred to one hundred and twenty-five bushels to the wagon, each wagon drawn by six yoke of oxen, thus we opened up what is yet called the old Phan-

tom Hill road. Phantom Hill is on the Clear Fork of the Brazos River. It took just one month to make the round trip to Fort Phantom Hill or Fort Chadborn. Ft. Chadborn was the next station on the line south and Fort Belknap was north of Phantom Hill. We ran this train of wagons to all three of these forts, following this old Phantom Hill trail, until we reached the Little Pecan Creek in the upper Cross Timbers, where we turned to the left for Chadborn. All the small creeks that afforded water enough for camping we honored with names. The Texas map has honored every name we gave except one. After leaving the Tyler and Dalrymple farms, the first creek we called Shale Creek. The second, a little creek which emptied into the Leon River near Straws Mill, we called Turnover, from the fact that one of our wagons was turned over there. And the Texas map has honored those two names. The next watering place a man by the name of Lewis turned his wagon over, so to make a distinction between the places we called this place Lewis Turnover, but it changed afterwards to Blue Creek. So on we went up the divide, between the Leon River and the Cowhouse, keeping on the Leon side of the divide in order to get water from its tributaries. The next watering place was a creek running into Leon about 15 miles above Gatesville, this was a regular camping place going and coming on every trip. On this stream was the finest grass I ever had seen. It was a sight to see our teams grazing in those valleys. Think of it, six yoke of oxen to the wagon:—one hundred and twenty head of steers all grazing in a

bunch. This creek was called Honey Creek. The next watering place was a branch heading about 10 miles South of Hamilton, from here we took the high divide and while our road was straight the crook of the river threw us to camp next night on the head water of a little stream that emptied into the Cow-house. This was called Little Cowhouse, which name it holds to this day. That camping place was about 3 miles below the Hoover Mountains. Those mountains took their name from the fact that Hoover and his wife had a fight with a squad of Indians. About ten or twelve Indians charged upon them, the wife was thrown from her horse, and Hoover was wounded early in the fight and both of them would have been killed, had it not been for some cow-boys who, hearing the shooting, ran to their relief,—but back to our trail.

On leaving Little Cow-house Creek. we went right between those two Hoover Mountains. The next watering place was called Warner Creek. This is in the upper edge of Hamilton County. We were then traveling several degrees north of what we had been. The next day we reached South Leon, and crossed it about two miles below where Fleming now is, about twelve miles below where the town of Comanche stands today. The next day we reached a small branch which we called Indian Creek. It empties into the main creek right at Comanche. This place, one mile southwest of the town of Comanche, was a camping place going and coming. The next water was a little stream, we called Sweet Water; it is now called Gidson Creek. Our camping place



there was in the edge of a town now called Sidney, but at that time there was not a house but only an open country, post oak timber, and fine mesquite grass. You could see a deer feeding five or six hundred yards off. While the oak timber was thick there was no underbrush. This was also a regular camping place in passing either way as long as that road was traveled. After leaving this place our next camping place was twenty miles, which was the longest drive made on the trip, from Fort Gates to Fort Phantom Hill. This camping place was in a flat post oak woods. There was a wide flat branch out on that high divide. It had channel sufficient for a large creek, being a rock bed which had holes in the rock; we herded our steers along the bed of this branch until we got water enough for them. This we called Deer River. I never saw as many deer in my life, in any country. All game for ten miles around had to get water at this place. After leaving Deer River our next camping place was on Little Pecan Creek. Here the roads forked, one running to Chadborn, the other to Phantom Hill. The rest of the camping places on the Phantom Hill road, were little holes of water in prairie branches. It was all a broken country and only a few days' drive across it. Most of our forage went to Fort Chadborn, and the route to that fort turned to the left at Pecan Creek. The best camping place was on the Pecan Bayou about 35 miles above Brownwood. The next camping place was on a little branch heading up against the mountains just above what is called Tecumpey Peak; this stream had no name. From

there we went to Elm Creek. That place was a regular camping place. From here we went to Valley Creek, which was the last camping place on the trail. The next day we reached Fort Chadborn, unloaded and got back to Valley Creek. On this Creek McCay & Gooch, (Dalrymple & McCay having dissolved partnership; Dalrymple went to Georgetown in Williamson County, and A. J. McCay took Gooch in as a partner,) continued to furnish the government with supplies, and I stayed with them on the ranch above mentioned, on Valley Creek. This branch is six miles from Fort Chadborn. The Fort is located on Oak Creek.

I worked on this ranch until I was twenty-one years old, and while there enjoyed life better than any three years of my life. Twice a week I had to kill and deliver a beef at the Fort, and the rest of my time I was on my horse riding over the prairies, watching the beef herd and running wolves. I was out one morning getting up the work steers, and had another boy with me by the name of J. L. Britton, who some fifteen years later, was Sheriff of Williamson county, when we came upon a wild turkey gobbler, very fat, and set in to catch him on horseback. I had never thought of trying to catch anything that could fly before this time. We took after him, and when we began to crowd upon him he rose and flew about three hundred yards, and when he hit the ground could never rise again, and we ran upon him and picked him up in a few minutes. After that we would often come upon a bunch of turkeys and put in after them and when they got

tired and hit the ground we could drive them into a pen like cattle or sheep. While out on that ranch we had great sport killing wolves, by getting out about fifty yards from the house and making a blind with two dry beef hides. When we had killed a beef we would take the head and stake it down behind the hides, and set on the other side of the hides and while the wolves were eating on the head we could shoot them. It could only be done by moonlight. Now, this wolf killing story may sound a little bit fishy, but there is living in Comanche today, a man named D. P. Pinkard, who was a small boy at that time, who will vouch for the truth of the story.

The first two years on that ranch we had an old yellow negro woman to cook and wash for the hands. I thought she was the best cook I ever had seen. She would often bake a lot of sweet cakes and put them away and at meal time set a little pan full on the table, though I would sometimes come in between meals, and if she was out after wood or water would fill my pockets with those cakes. So you see I was having a good time for a boy. The old girl discovered that someone was making away with her cakes, and thought she would hide them from the thief. She had an idea it was me and it was not a bad idea either. At one time a young doctor named Owens was up at the ranch on a visit from his home at Georgetown. He and I were down on the creek fishing one day, and while we were out the old darkey cooked up a lot of cakes and hid them as she thought where no one could find them, when we came in, the old girl was down

at the creek washing, and we began a hunt for the cakes. The house was made of pickets 14x35 feet and covered with ducking and had pole rafters. Dr. Owens began to look in every box and trunk for the cakes. After he had come to the conclusion that he could not find the cakes, he looked over and said to me, "Cross, what are you doing sitting back there and not helping to hunt for them cakes," and I told him I had found them. He said: "How have you found anything sitting there in that chair?" I told him I used to find honey sitting on the ground and watching the bees, and told him if he would look up at that sack tied to the rafter, with the house-flies swarming about it, he might find the cakes were there; he did so, and we got them down and filled our shot-pouches full of cakes and lit out for the evening. That night the old cook told us if we would let her cakes alone she would give us a pocket full every day, and we compromised with her on her own terms.

About the time my father moved to Texas, there was a man by the name of Nabors, employed by the government to officiate in a treaty of peace with the Southern Comanche Indians, this treaty had the effect of a friendly feeling for several years. They took the chief of the tribe to Washington City, and while there gave him a photo of the President. This chief's name was Santa Anna, and while I was on Valley Creek ranch, Colonel Gooch and I were out hunting one evening, and found his grave, we knew it by the photo. While this treaty was being made the government was feeding the Indians and they

would come in bunches of from fifty to a hundred at a time, and camp at our ranch. They often had an order from the quartermaster for a beef, so all I had to do was to shoot it down and they would divide it up among themselves. There was an old squaw with them whom they said was the wife of the great Chief Santa Anna, the old Indian that Gooch and myself found the grave of. This old squaw and her squad of some fifty Indians would visit that grave every six months, and just here I can say that I saved the massacre of our boys on that ranch, by knowing the wife of that great chief. They had been at my father's house in Bell County before the County had ten families in it, and my mother gave them a good dinner, so the old woman thought a great deal of me. When they found that the grave of her husband was destroyed, they became hostile about it, and went to the Fort and made complaint about it to the commanding officer; he sent a white man who was employed as interpreter to investigate the matter, and the whole squad of Indians came with him. I saw that the Indians were excited. The white man came up to me, and told me what the trouble was. I informed him that I was one of the party that found the grave, and that we had put everything back just as we had found it. Though after it was known that the Great Chief of the Comanche tribe was buried there, the officers and their families came out, and took off some of the silver plates from his regalia, and sent them back to their friends in the old country. So the interpreter told them what I said about it. The wife of the

buried chief told the squad of Indians that all was right, so I found that my father's kind treatment to those Indians ten years before had served as a shield to us, even after so long a time, and fulfilled scripture, that bread cast upon the water may be gathered up many days hence.

While I was employed on this ranch, I was often sent down into the settlements after beef cattle to butcher for the soldiers. I usually went down alone, and brought up the cattle, then hired a hand to help drive them back. I generally rode a good horse, and carried two six-shot pistols, one a navy siege, which I belted around me, and the other a dragoon siege that I hung on the horn of my saddle. In those days I could run almost as fast as any saddle-horse. I had my provisions fixed up and got all in shape for an early morning start on one of these trips, when just before sundown, a posse of Indians came and camped in the valley near by. I knew if I waited until morning and they saw me leave alone some of them might follow me up and try to get the mule I was riding, so I left that night about 10 o'clock, and rode about 18 or 20 miles and lay down to sleep until day. When I reached Deer River, mentioned before as a camping place, about 9 o'clock the next night, I made my coffee and broiled some meat and proceeded to take a lunch, then after spreading my blankets preparatory to taking a nap, gave the mule a little corn on my saddle blanket. I had him tied the full length of my stake rope so he could graze within 6 or 8 feet of where I was lying. The moon had just risen and it



was a little cloudy, which made the moonlight flicker, the mule discovered an object about thirty steps off and gave a snort, walking back the length of his rope, looked right over where I was lying, and quit eating his corn, would walk back and forth, snorting every time he got to the end of his rope. Having seen a smoke that evening just before sunset, a few miles from the road, I thought it might be Indians following me up to try to get my mule, and I turned over on my pallet to spy out for them, fearing to get up, which would give them a goot shot at me. When I turned over and looked in the direction the mule was looking, I saw the object that was scaring the mule, and was very sure it was an Indian; was sure I could see his bow and quiver hanging over his shoulder. I thought as his bow was not strung and in a position for action, I would just lay still and watch him until he came close enough that I could make a sure shot. I had always had a desire to kill an Indian, but just at this time I did not feel so much of the former bravery as I did when there was none in sight. There I lay and watched that object for at least 40 minutes. The mule was still, snorting and would not eat a bite. Then I thought I would decide this thing at once. I could not go to sleep with that mule snorting and the hair on my head standing as straight as a porcupine's quills. So I got up, with my army siege six-shooter in my right hand and the navy in the left, and my hair standing straight up, and walked up to the object and punched it with my six-shooter. I was much surprised, and very agreeably so, to find that it was a post oak stump from



which Jack Loller and myself had cut the tree off about three feet from the ground, the winter before, for camping wood.

While I was staying on this ranch, the proprietors, McCoy and Gooch, employed old father Watson, who died about 12 years ago, 6 miles below the town of Comanche, to come out and look after the ranch where we kept our cattle, and while he was up there his oldest daughter and I got to be lovers, and finally entered into a marriage contract. I knew a wild country life would not suit me after marriage, and as her father told me that he was going to move to the settlements the next fall, I concluded I would move there also. I procured a one-horse buggy and taking my girl, we set out. The first house on our route was the home of one Jesse Mercer, on what is called Mercer's Creek, about 8 miles South of where Comanche town is now located. As there were about 8 or 10 families living up in that country it was called Mercer's Colony. Mr. Mercer and Dr. Tuggle being the first families settling there. So my intended and self stopped with Mr. Mercer for the night, and the family arranged for a wedding, while I went about one and a half miles after a preacher, and I got George W. Montgomery, a Christian preacher, to officiate at the ceremony for us. This was the first marriage pulled off in what is now known as Comanche County. It may seem a little strange to you, but only three days after we were married at Mercer's that night, we were the first couple married in Coryell County. It occurred this way: It was the custom in this new and unorganized country for a minis-

ter to perform the rights of matrimony and give a certificate to the parties, which would be recorded the same as a regular license. The minister gave me the certificate in this instance, and when we reached Gatesville the county had just been organized, and the County Clerk, a young man and a very wise young fellow, who knew very little law, was afraid to make a record of the matter, so I just had him issue a license and we were married again in Gatesville. So I was the first man married in Comanche County, also the first in Coryell County. From here we went to Bell County.

While I was out on the frontier at the old fort before mentioned, about three years, Bell County had settled up a great deal. The town of Belton had become quite a village of some ten or fifteen business houses. Right here I will give you a little joke on myself: When the first little store was put up in Belton, it being the one that as before stated was moved from the Joel Blair place by John Pain, the postoffice was kept in that store, with Mr. Pain as postmaster. In those days there was no such thing as a postage stamp and all letters were addressed to the place it was to go, and the addressee paid 5 cents for his letter when he got it. My father sent me one day to Belton to mail a letter, and when I got there I just walked in and handed it to Mr. Pain, telling him here was a letter I wanted mailed, he told me to step out of doors and put it in the box. I stepped out at the door, supposing I would find a little box nailed up against the wall of the house, but could not see any box, I just walked around to the back end

and there found a little pine box that looked like it had been used for carrying lime in. I did not think it was the proper place to put the letter in, but was determined not to let anyone know that I was so green. I could not think of asking where the letter box was, so just dropped it in that little box. Then the thought came to me, that if it should rain before the mail was sent off the letter would be ruined, and to prevent this I turned the box over the letter and pulled out for home. But I felt sure that that letter was not at the right place, and was uneasy, day and night. It was on my mind, yet I would not tell anyone. About ten days later, my father sent me to the store again for some groceries, and while there in the store, a man came in, just like I had done, and offered Mr. Pain a letter to mail, he instructed him just as he had me, ten days before. "Step out doors and put it in the box." You know I watched that fellow like a hawk would a chicken, he stepped out and asked a man that was standing in the yard, where the letter box was, the man pointed to a little hole in the wall, and told him to slip his letter in there. That the box was in the house but the letter would drop in it. You bet I felt good to know that there was some one as green as I was. You may guess I kept my eye on that little hole until those men went into the house, and then I slipped around to the little lime box where I left my letter and found it all right although it had been there ten days. I took it and slipped it in the little hole in the wall. From that day to this, I have known what a letter box is,

I will now give you some idea of the value of the unimproved land of Bell County, sixty years ago. The most of the land at the first settling was vacant. A man with a family could pre-empt 640 acres, while a single man could take up 320 acres, but there had been parties through this country and located a considerable amount of land, surveys that were called leagues and labores. Those lands were cut up and sold in small tracts to the early settlers at 50 cents to one dollar per acre. I have seen as good land as there is in Bell County, sell for one dollar per acre, and to say the least of it, Bell County is one of the best counties in the great State of Texas for farming and I expect today it is one of the wealthiest in the State. A number of men purchased land while it was so cheap, that in 15 years it made them independent. Dr. Embry, Ramsey Cox, Dred Hill, O. G. Tiler and many others I could name, bought land while it was so cheap and the advance on the value of land has made some of their posterity independently rich. Ed Good, who has been mentioned in a previous chapter of this book as a school teacher, in Bell County, bought land enough on Dain's Creek to make all his children and grandchildren rich, at present prices, which he paid only one dollar per acre for at that time. After I left the ranch on the frontier where I had spent the last three years of my single life, and came back to Bell County, I rented a small piece of land from my father eight miles above the town of Belton, on Noland Creek. There I made a crop of corn, and in the fall moved to Mercer's Colony in Comanche County.

## CORYELL COUNTY.

As to Lampasas, Coryell and Hamilton Counties. I can only give you a slight sketch of them, as there were no white men living in them at the time of my first trip through. Those counties were settled and organized while I was out on the frontier ranch near Fort Chadborn. Coryell County was very well divided as to timber and prairie, having the Leon River, Owl Creek and Cowhouse, running through it. On all those streams was good timber. Owl Creek had fine large cedar-brakes on it that were very valuable, as wire and planks for fencing was not known or even thought of in that day.

Coryell county was a very good farming country. The lands, all except the mountains, was rich. The river valley was fine and the timber bottoms very rich. The high prairie was a deep black soil, fine for corn, cotton and small grain. In the early settling of Coryell County there was one Mr. Murrell who settled on Clear Creek, twelve miles above Gatesville. He had several negroes and he put into cultivation about one hundred acres of land, and made a dam on the creek and irrigated that farm. He was well-to-do before the war came up between the states. The first mill put up in Coryell County was at Gatesville and was erected by a man named Grant. This man did more for the town of Gatesville than any one of the first settlers. There were a few settlers in the lower edge of Coryell County before the County was organized. O. T. Tiler, before mentioned, was one of them.

When I was engaged in hauling supplies to Fort Gates, my father had three wagons and teams; I drove one and one Thomas Deaton another. I was but a boy, living with my father in Bell County, and Tom Deaton being a young man, was boss of the train. One day Deaton told me that the settlers had decided to put a ferry boat on the Leon River, so when the river was up and not fordable, we could cross on the boat, and told me he had contracted to get out the gunnels for the boat, and deliver them where the boat was to be built. The logs used for making the boat gunnels being very long and heavy we would have to load by the use of skid-poles, placing one end of each pole on the wagon, and the other end resting on the ground, ten or twelve feet from the wagon. The front and hind wheels being about twenty feet apart, our coupling pole to the wagon was made of a small pecan sapling 20 feet long. We got chains enough to reach from the log to the other side of the wagon. Then hitched two yoke of cattle to each end of the log and pulled it right onto the wagon. We would hook up 10 yoke of steers to a wagon and haul them to the place where they were building the boat. The place would now be called a dock yards. This was the first boat ever christened for service on the Leon River, and I do not remember that there was any champagne broken on this boat at its launching. It was put into service between old Fort Gates and where Gatesville now is.



## LAMPASAS COUNTY.

Lampasas County was settled and organized before Hamilton County because of the sulphur water at that place, which was first discovered in the early settling of that part of the country. Those springs have been a great pleasure resort ever since. I have seen as much as 20 acres of ground solidly covered at one time with tents in the day of their discovery, especially during the summer season. It is a great pleasure, as well as health resort, at this time for afflicted people. In fact the sulphur water has made Lampasas what she is today, and will always keep it a good town.

This county has not as much good farming land as either Bell or Coryell County, but is better adapted to stock raising. I expect there are more cattle raised in Lampasas County than in any county east of here and probably many of the western counties except in the extreme west, which are given over almost entirely to stock-raising. Lampasas has a great many flocks of sheep in it. Among the first stockmen, were Uncle Charley Mullins and his boys. Those men were large owners of stock, both cattle and horses. They were not only good stockmen but good Indian fighters. To say the least of it they did as much towards building up Lampasas County as any other family that ever lived in it. Old Uncle Charley Mullins died long years ago at Thrifty, in Brown County. His oldest son, Ike, died before his father; his death occurred at Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Uncle Bill Mullins still lives in Lampasas



County, but when I last heard from him he was very feeble .Uncle John is living at Thrifty, in Brown County. Aunt Jane Cross, the oldest child of Uncle Charley, is still living at or near the little town of Thrifty, in Brown County.

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### HAMILTON COUNTY.

Hamilton County has some fine lands in it, also has some very rough country. The farming land is rich and fertile. Portions of Hamilton County were very broken and caused the early settlers a great deal of trouble, it afforded such good hiding place for the Indians. They could hide in those rough mountains and depredate on the settlers for a long time without being discovered. The North Leon river runs right through the center of the county and the little streams that emptied into the Leon River were lined with timber, this made the river very rough. One of the first settlers in this part of the country was a man by the name of Fuaqua; he lived about twelve miles above where Hamilton now stands and that settlement is yet known by the name of Fuaqua Settlement. There was another old man in that neighborhood by the name of Fred Gentry, who was a great help to that country in its early settling, and let me say just here that that part of Hamilton

County suffered as much from Indian depredations as any community in the State. There was George Gentry, Marion Graves, Elick Powers, Wm. Hanson and a man by the name of Manning, all from that neighborhood who were in the Civil War together and while out on a scout on the mountains of Jim Ned Creek they got into a hand to hand fight with a posse of Indians, and two of the boys got wounded, George Gentry and Elick Powers. Powers was shot with an arrow through the foot. He was on the ground and struck a bush, breaking the arrow off, leaving the spike in his foot, from about eleven o'clock until sunset that evening. Gentry was shot with an arrow which struck him in the stomach but it was at a long distance and the arrow was shot at high elevation and was coming almost straight down when it hit him, it just went a little under the skin, and did not hurt him. I am unable to say whether those boys are all yet living or not, as I have not heard from them in many years. George Gentry was living in the town of Dublin not many years ago. Marion Graves was living in Hamilton some years back, and I suppose he is there yet, if living. The rest of the boys that were with me in the war, from Hamilton, I cannot tell their whereabouts, I suppose many of them are dead, as I have not heard of them in a long time. They were older men than I. Those boys had a hot time with the Indians. It was in this settlement just after the war, that the young lady school teacher was killed by the Indians, and Mr. Manning, whom I have mentioned in a previous chapter as being with me in the war, was a patron of

that school. The Willbarger History of Indian Depredations in Texas, has given this killing correctly, but as there are some young people grown up that probably have never seen that history, I thought I would give it to the readers of this book.

This young lady school teacher was a Miss Whitney. I knew her from the early settling of Bell County, though I have forgotten her given name. The school house where the killing of Miss Whitney took place was situated right on the edge of the Leon River bottom and in front for five or six hundred yards, was an open valley. Her pupils were all small children. One of the children looking out at the door saw the Indians just as they were coming into the clearing at the further edge of the broad valley. To be sure that she was right she stepped to the door and taking a careful look at them was satisfied that they were Indians and turned back to the teacher and said to her: "There are Indians coming and they are coming straight here." But there having been no Indian troubles for a long time, and the country full of cow hunters, she thought the child was mistaken, and without looking told the child to get her lesson, that it was just some cowboys. She never went to the door to look, as she was so sure it was cowboys, but the little girl kept watching them, and at last she jumped up and said: "It is Indians, for I see their bows and they have got them in their hands." At this earnest suggestion the teacher stepped to the door and saw the Indians n about one hundred yards of the house. She was satisfied from their actions that they meant to kill

them, and got some of the children out of the house, and told them to run down into the bottom. The rest were little fellows and she put them under the floor and told them not to make any noise. By this time the Indians were all around the house. In watching through the cracks of the house she discovered that the Indians had located the children's whereabouts and saw that they had caught one of Mr. Manning's little boys. A big Indian was holding him by the hand. At this time some of the Indians were shooting arrows through the cracks of the house at Miss Whitney, while others were at work bursting the door down. Soon they were in the house sticking spears and arrows in the body of that noble-hearted woman, who, with the blood streaming from her body, begged the Indians to kill her but not to hurt the children. Thus that beloved girl sank down in death. Miss Whitney was a sister of Ed Whitney, who died in Comanche County a few years ago. The little son of Mr. Manning was recaptured by white men and brought home.

I have in a previous chapter stated that Coryell, Hamilton and Lampasas Counties were all organized while I was out on the ranch at Fort Chadborn. I cannot give all the particulars of their organization, as I was not living in them at the time, but ask you to pardon me for dropping back from other parts of my writing to tell of things which occurred while I was passing through them. After living in Comanche, Brown and Navarro Counties, I dropped back into Bell County. This move was after the Civil War.

Lampasas had settled up considerably at this time. There were several business houses in it. In the year 1872 a waterspout burst on the valley above town, which being near the river, in a low valley, was overflowed. There was a slough and higher ground between it and the river, on which several houses had been built. Some of them were washed away. One of them was occupied by a man by the name of Garrison. He and all of his family were drowned. The slough ran through between those houses and cut the parties off from the main part of town. It was past fording before any houses were in danger on the high ground. There was one fellow that stayed in his house until the water came up in his floor and then got out to climb on top of the house, but when he stepped out into the yard the water was stronger than he thought and carried him down ten or fifteen steps, where he caught on a pecan bush. There he was, with the water rising at the rate of three inches a minute. He could not turn loose from the bush as he could not swim a lick; so he began to try to make peace with his Creator. He had never tried to pray before in all his life, but the time had come that he felt like trying, and in trying to think of what to say, his father's old grace came to his mind, and he cried out: "O Lord, make us thankful for what we are about to receive." Just as the water was getting up to the chin of the praying man it stopped rising and soon began to fall, so the poor fellow was saved from drowning. Whether or not he was saved by his prayers, is yet to be decided. The writer has many

friends who lived in Lampasas County; some of whom have passed over the Jordan of death, and some are still living.

I was on a trip to Bell county, about two months ago and in passing through Lampasas town, had the pleasure of shaking hands with some of them. Mr. Browning, Fulton John Nickels, who was a soldier mate in time of the war. I will tell a little joke on John. Two Indians passed our camp one time at Colorado Post. They had six head of stolen horses and were passing near where our horses were being herded. The man on guard ran into camp and reported, there were about thirty men in camp and had been detailed to go out on a scout, we all mounted our horses, and lit out after those two Indians, and after about twelve miles' chase we came in sight of them; every man put spurs to his horse and the best horse got there first. Luther Allen, who was County Clerk of Coryell County for several years after the war, was the first to catch up with the Indians, and he shot and killed one of them. By this time five or six of us had reached the battle ground. When this Indian was killed the other one ran on about three hundred yards to an elm grove. He was trying to reach a grove of post oak timber that lay North of Coleman about three miles, but he saw we would get him before he could reach there and he left his horse, taking it on foot, thinking with the advantage of those elm saplings he might stand us off. There was a post oak thicket of about one-half of an acre in size right south of the grove the Indian was making for he ran and got in that thicket; (Cap-



tain Tom Wright, who is now living in Temple, was at that time a lieutenant in our company, and in command of this scout) by this time there were ten or twelve men there. Some left their horses, which had given out, and came on afoot. We were all dry for water, and there was a branch about three hundred yards off, so Lieutenant Wright put a guard around the thicket the Indian was in, and let the men go, four at a time, to get water. When all had gotten water, I think we had increased to fourteen in number, our lieutenant said: "Now boys, we have got one of the bougers killed, and the other where he can't get away, and let us not get anyone hurt; we can get him without it." So he detailed four men to surround the thicket while the other ten made a drive through. When they came out they had a Yankee blue roundabout and his moccasins that he had shedded, but did not see the Indian; he had snaked across the glade and got into some high shin-oaks right up against a prairie bluff. The brush was so thick we could not see him and he could not use his bow in there, so we got right up around the little thicket, shooting in at random. Some one got a bullet into him and he came out with his bow strung—and here is the joke I have on John Nickels: He was standing right in front of the Indian, putting a cap on his gun, and I am sure the Indian though John was the man that had shot him in the thicket, for he sent every arrow right at him, and John fell down in the high grass and crawled down the hillside to dodge those arrows. Tom Wright shot and cut the Indian's bow in two in the middle



with his rifle. More than twenty shots hit that Indian in a moment and yet he got back into that thicket before he fell, and when we got in to where he was he was nearly stiff. He had been shot so much his hide was not fit for shoestrings. A boy about sixteen years old by the name of Sincler shot that Indian just as he came out of the thicket and hollered out: "There, I shot him right in the mouth," and when we examined him we found that the boy had hit him right in the corner of the mouth; the shot tore all the flesh off of that side of his face. The pistol was one of those old holster pistols, and he had just loaded it, and the boy being excited had filled it about five inches with powder. It was sixteen inches long in the barrel; when he shot the Indian in the mouth the barrel burst for about four inches. In those days boys were about the best Indian fighters we had, for they never thought of danger.

Now I will get back to the first year of my married life which was spent in Bell County. As before stated, the county was sparsely settled, though the people were more social than they are now days, and had more confidence in each other than at the present time. I well remember the first money I ever borrowed in my life. When I was married at Mr. Mercer's, as stated in a previous chapter of this book, I left the buggy at Mercer's. It belonged to Parson Montgomery, the preacher who officiated at my first marriage ceremony. I also left my horse with him. He agreeing to bring the horse to me when he came down to Belton after supplies in the spring, and I

hired a man by the name of Ekles to take us on to Bell County. In the spring Montgomery came down and brought my horse as he had agreed to. I met with him eight miles west of Belton. He had stopped for noon. I lived one mile from there, and having just fitted up for house-keeping, was out of money, but asked him what I was due him for the feed and care of my horse. He said five dollars. I told him I would have his money there by the time he was through with dinner. I saw a little new house up in the cove of the mountain and rode up to the house and called at the yard gate. A man came out and asked me to alight and come in. I told him I did not have time, that I lived about one and a half miles down on the creek, and had met a man out there on the road that I owed \$5.00 and wanted to borrow that amount of money for a short time, and without asking my name, just walked back into the house and came out with a five-dollar gold piece in his hand and gave it to me. I then asked him his name and he said Northcut, but said they usually called him Hoge. It was the same Hoge Northcut that afterward moved and settled in Comanche county, and has children and grandchildren now living in that county.

In those days men had confidence in each other, but those days of confidence have all passed. I would like to see the face of a stranger, at this time, that could borrow \$5.00 from a man he had never seen or heard of before without giving a gilt-edged security.

Now reader I want to say that during the first settling of this country, some fifty years ago, people were more kind-hearted, generous and benevolent than in these later years, while there are some men who have followed up the footsteps of their forefathers, they are very few and far between.

I have known men whose fathers came to Texas when they were boys from the Northern states, and those boys had fine schools to start into and get a good education, while their fathers had the fat of the country to make money out of. I have seen those kind of men standing on the streets of our cities with a ten-cent cigar in their mouth talking about the old pioneers, saying if they had had any sense they could have been rich. I will tell you why those old early settlers are not millionaires and why those who came later are. In the first place, those early settlers had no free schools and the country was so thinly settled it was a hard proposition to even get up a little subscription school, the teachers were mostly women, as the men had to be at work improving, and those good women had about enough education to get into one of our colleges of today, if you were to blindfold them and back them in like getting a horse out of a fire; these schools were taught by such teachers as the one before mentioned in this book, who was killed by Indians. So you can see why the old settlers' children and grand children grew up without education. Those who have grown up in later days of peace and plenty, do not realize what the first settlers had to contend with. This is why so many of the old fellows

are so illiterate today, as you have no doubt already discovered of your humble servant. I will give you a few reasons why there are no very wealthy men among the early settlers. We had no railroads to bring farming machinery or to transport our products to market, or to bring building material, but we cultivated our farms with plows made out and out—lock, stock and barrel, by a wood and blacksmith. All wood, but a point and land bar, with a wood mouldboard; now-a-days called the wing of the plow, using oxen for teams and a boy to engineer them, and a good days' work was to sod one-half of an acre. After the land was turned we had to pulverize it with a large wood harrow. Plows used in cultivating were either a straight shovel or bull tongue. We made the stock out of wood, something similar in shape to the Georgia stock, these plows were pulled by a yoke of oxen. I am now seventy-five years old and I never saw a double-shovel until I was forty years old; that is, in this part of the state. When we raised wheat we had to clean off a place on the ground and spread wagon sheets down, laying the bundles around in a circle some thirty feet in diameter with the head up and towards the center of the circle and put boys on horses and go round and round and tramp out the grain. This process must have been taken from the Scriptures where the angel was seen over the threshing floor of Oman, the Nebuzite. The wheat was cut with a cradle, or reap hooks, and bound in bundles by hand with a little wisp of the straw. We could not raise stock to accumulate wealth as the In-

dians would steal and drive them off faster than we could raise them.

Those circumstances account for there being no very wealthy men among the older settlers, most of whom are passing away, leaving no legacy for their children, and while they ought to have the honor and credit of doing something for this country they are looked upon and referred to as a very common class of people. Not having a finished education and wealth, they are classed as mossbacks or hayseeds by the aristocracy of the present day. I can tell you why the rising generations and later emigrants to this country are, some of them, wealthy, and a few, millionaires. When they began to come to this country, they had nothing to do but just start right into making money. The old pioneers had driven the Indians out and the country was civilized and Christianized and capital from the old states began to come into this country and railroads came in, bringing farming implements and machinery and creating a market for the products of labor and land, also material to build with; in fact everything needed for improving, was at hand. Thirty years ago land was selling at from one to two dollars per acre, that is, good farming land. Pasture land from fifty to seventy-five cents per acre. There were men that came into this country in those days who bought up large tracts of land that is now worth from twenty-five to fifty dollars per acre—the advance in prices on the land has made them rich,

## COMANCHE COUNTY.

In the fall of 1855 I moved up to Comanche County and settled about three miles from where Newburg now is, on Mountain Creek. There were at that time about twenty-five or thirty families in that country, yet the county was not organized. They had an election of officers before I reached there. I think this was done to start the organization of the county. They had selected old Cora, as the place for the county seat, twelve miles east of where the town of Comanche now is. Soon after I got there they had an election in which Jim Martin was elected Sheriff and Frank Collier first County Clerk. I will not try to give all of the County officers, as I do not remember all of them, but all county business was transacted at the town of Old Cora for some years before the county lines were established. The first District Judge to hold court in Comanche County was N. W. Battler of Waco, and McCall I think was the first District Attorney. The first criminal case of note tried was old Billy Tatum, better known as old Bud Tatum. He was tried for the killing of Wylie Baggett, and the writer was a witness in the case, the defendant's counsel was Col. Norris of Waco, after about three trials Tatum was acquitted. The next murder case tried at Cora, was Ace Reade. He was charged with being an accessory to the killing of a man by the name of Foreman. This killing was done a little while before the first case tried. The man that killed Foreman was Joe Reade. He was never caught, and his father, though implicated in the killing, was cleared.



By this time our new county began to think of getting down to business in a business way as there were many new comers settling in it, and they had the surveyor, Mr. Lon Price, to run out the county lines. Finding Old Cora to be in the extreme lower edge of the county, the commissioners moved the county seat to where it now is, and gave it the same name as the county.

When I settled on Mountain Creek, four families lived on that creek. James Cunningham, better known as Captain Cunningham; Charlie Campbell, Thomas Dunlap, Jonathan Watson, all of them as good neighbors as I ever lived by in my life. I will tell you something of two of those neighbors, and I assure you I am not flattering them to their offspring who may read this book. It is likely, at least I think so, that any of the rest of those neighbors would have been just of the same good principles if they had had the same opportunities. Campbell and Cunningham each had a small stock of cattle and when the new-comers would settle around them they would go to them, and if they wanted cows to milk, would tell them to make themselves cowpens and would pen them all the cows they needed to milk, and when either of those two men killed a beef they would just send a man to all of the neighbors, telling them to come over and get all the beef they wanted. They never asked a cent of pay for it, and this was done every two or three weeks during the summer season. Those were two of the best-to-do men in that country at that time. Now reader, if you will show me two of the wealthiest men of your



country today that have that kind of sympathy for the poor class of people, I will show you a black bird as white as a snowball.

There was also Jessie Mercer, Dr. Tuggle, and Joseph Hicks, who were in very good circumstances, and I think were very kind to their neighbors when in needy circumstances. To say the least of it the early settlers of Comanche County had hearts in them like unto an ox.

When Comanche County first began to settle up I thought it was the finest country I had ever seen, and it was a sight to look upon those fine valleys of grass, and beautiful post oak timber and to add to the benefit of those early settlers the country was full of game, deer, turkey, antelope and occasionally a bear. The first bear I saw in this country was after the country was organized; George W. Montgomery, Nat Dawson and I were appointed to survey or rather review a road from Old Cora to the Lampasas County line, crossing the Cowhouse Creek near the head of it. Soon after the road was reviewed, there were six or eight hands sent out to open up the road and just before we got to Cowhouse Creek out on the high prairie we met a large bear. It was in the summer season and the beast was trying to cross the divide and get over on the Leon where it could find the rough brakes. We put out after him, some on horseback and some on foot, and those on horseback would head the bear off and hold him up until those on foot got up. The first timber we reached was in about three hundred yards of old man Albin's house. He lived right where the town of

Energy now is. The bear climbed up the first tree he came to, and Mr. Albin went to the house and got his rifle. He brought one of his little boys with him, and in order to have it said that his little boy killed the first bear in the county, his father taking aim on the bear's head let the boy pull the trigger. At the crack of the gun the bear fell out. I think it was Pate Albin that killed the first bear. This is my recollection, but it has been so long ago I may mistake some events as to dates, and just how certain things occurred, yet they are only slight errors and have the same meaning. I am glad to know that there are enough old settlers yet living in each county that I am writing about to verify and correct anything I may say about the country.

My father opened the first store in Comanche County but in twelve months or less, Uncle Dick Carnes and his brother, Ship, came in from Georgia and put up another store. About that time J. M. Cross and Jesse Mercer put in a steam saw and grist mill. This was at Old Cora, which at that time was the county seat of Comanche County. So I left Mountain Creek, and moved down to town in order to help build and run that mill. When I moved to Cora the inhabitants of the town were my father, J. M. Cross, T. J. Nabors, Samuel Steel, James Jeffrey, Richard Carnes, Tom Mathas, Frank Collier and Jas. Martin. Those employed in getting timber for the frame work of that first mill were T. J. Nabors, Sam Steel, Ike Jeffrey, myself and a young man by the name of Andrew Stewart. We went to North Leon River to cut and haul those timbers, for the framing

of the mill building. (I will say right here that this young man Stewart, before mentioned in this book, was the father of Terry, Billy and Lee Stewart; all of these brothers are living in this county.) We had not been long at work on the mill building when some more families came into the county. Old man Huckaby, who has a son now living near Blanket; Peter Gates, John Malone and Elick Piper, all of whom were employed and added to our force in building the mill house, and by the time the machinery got there we were ready for putting it in place. They hired a man at Georgetown who was an engineer, to put the machinery in and run the engine for some time; his name was Robert Brooks. After this mill was put up I ran it as long as it was kept at this place. The owners found that it was too costly machinery for such a thinly settled country and moved it to Bell County. During the two years it was operated in this county it cut several thousand feet of oak and cottonwood lumber. When we got walnut or sycamore logs we cut them into scantling and sold it for making furniture, to Mr. Matthews, who was running a wood shop at that place at the time.

By this time there were quite a number of people moved and settled in Cora and the surrounding country, and by the way, there were some of them religious. The first sermon preached in the county was delivered by one of two men, I cannot now say which, but it was either Mance Coker or old Brother Childress. They were both local preachers and old pioneers of this country and as good men, I think, as ever lived. The first Methodist minister that was

termed a circuit rider in this county was a Mr. Kidd, and the first presiding Elder was Rev. Louis W. Nappels. I shall never forget the first conference held in the county. There was an old brother by the name of Stedham Nealey, usually called Uncle Zack. He had got on a little "whiz," as they called it in those days, and old Uncle Peter Gates, having a strong dislike for whiskey, reported the old brother to the conference. The quarterly conference was held in a little board house that we had for a court house, and when the question was asked, "Are there any complaints," the pastor answered, "Yes," and handed him a paper on which was the bill of charges, and the Elder read the charges out as follows: "Brother Stedham, we are told that you have taken too much of the intoxicates and likewise as to this question do you answer guilty or not guilty?" To this Mr. Stedham answered: "Brother Whippels, I can't say that I have, though I must confess that I was up here at Mr. Martin's grocery the other day and I took it a little too fast." They pardoned the old brother.

I want to give you another joke we got on another one of our old boys. He was a very good man. This was Tom Dunlap. He and Tom Deaton, before mentioned in this book, were running for the office of sheriff, it being the second race for that office in Comanche county and the candidates were doing their best electioneering. There was a man by the name of Dawson living on Little Mountain Creek. Dunlap was so sure that Dawson would vote for him that he told him one day just before the election that he wanted him to be on hand on election day, but

Dawson said he had no shoes fit to wear to town. Dunlap said he would send him a pair, and did,—sent his wife's shoes to Dawson, and when he got to town on election day Dawson rooted for the other man, and Tom Deaton was elected. If Dunlap had not made the mistake, but had sent his own shoes instead of his wife's, he would have been one vote, if no more, nearer to Deaton. This was the second sheriff's race while Old Cora was the county seat.

A man by the name of Kingsberry put up a store in Cora and did business there some time after the town was moved to Comanche. This man Kingsberry and Frank Collier, Uncle Dick Carnes, Sam Steele, James Jeffrey, Tom Matthews, old man Huckaby and myself still stayed at Old Cora until the war of '61. This country settled up faster than any country in this belt of Texas. Jesse Mercer, Mr. Cooper, John McGuier, Hoge Northcut and Ed Whitney all came to this country from Bell County. There was also a family by the name of McKinzie, the old man and some married sons. The old man settled a place on Durby Creek and lived and died and was buried on that place. This place was called the Watson place for a long time. It was on that place that Watson died and a man named Pinkerd now owns the place. The old man McKinzie, who was laid to rest on the place, was killed by the Indians. One of his sons, Kinith McKinzie, was afterwards killed at Comanche in an Indian fight. At the time this occurred there were only a few houses in the town. Late one evening a report reached there that there were Indians in the settlement but by the time the

men of the town could get together, get their horses and get out after them, it was night. The men had only gotten about two hundred yards from the public square when they met a posse of Indians in a grove of scattering oak timber which ran right up into the town. When they saw the Indians they first thought them to be a party of white men coming to join them and had not so much as drawn their arms or made any preparation for fight, until they were right together and the Indians were shooting arrows into them. In this fight McKinzie was killed. The fight took place west of the public square in what is now the thickest settled part of town. I am very sure that the fight in Comanche that night saved me from getting shot from the brush the next day. I was out at Charlie Campbell's place planting corn for him, working a yoke of steers that were very gentle and a very fine plow team, and late in the evening I was plowing in rows about a hundred and fifty yards in length, the rows running right up to the fence, which was right close to a bluff on Mountain Creek. Just room for a wagon road between the fence and the bank of the creek and there was a trail leading down the bank into the bed of the creek. So late that evening I was turning at that end of my row and just as the steers turned around they threw up their heads and jerked the plow-handles out of my hands and ran about half way back towards the other end of the rows before I could stop them. I thought of going back and coming down the rows right, but just at that time Campbell rode up to the house. He had been to Comanche



that evening and got the news of the fight in town and was sitting on his horse, with his hat in his hand, talking to his wife and children, and I knew from his appearance that there was something wrong and just dropped my team loose and went to the house. It was just about sunset. Campbell told me about the fight in town the night before and said to me that we had better get up our horses and tie them in the yard, which we did before dark. Just after dark awhile I got to thinking about how my steers had acted when I turned them at the end of the rows. They had never done such a thing before, and I told Mr. Campbell about it. He said it was a lucky thing for me that the steers ran away, that there were Indians hidden under the creek bank, and if I had gone back there again they would have shot me in the back as I turned. So the next morning Sol Beard and myself went out to see what sign we could find. and sure enough there had been two Indians lying right up to the edge of the bank. Plain prints of their moccasins in the sand where they had sat for me. The steers had smelled them and ran or they would have gotten me that time. During that raid the people had to be on the watch for several days and nights. They stayed in that time longer than usual, as there were but few people in the country, and when we got a scout out after the Indians it took all the rest of the men left to guard our families and what few horses were left.

I will here relate a little joke on two of the boys who were left to guard the families and stock. They were rather good boys, brave enough, I had in time

passed, freighted with one of them, and know he was not a coward, but somehow the sight of a red man excited the boys. It was at George Montgomery's they had to guard the horses. Aston Montgomery and Dave Parker were the boys left on guard, and when night came on they tied the horses to oak trees which stood in the yard. G. W. Montgomery lived about six hundred yards south of where Newburg now is, and his house stood inside the field, the fence running just back of the house. He told the boys they could watch the horses until midnight and he would watch the latter part of the night. To this the boys readily agreed, and taking their shotguns they sat on the inside of the fence, the shadow of which hid them from view of anyone on the outside. About 9 o'clock the boys noticed the horses looking right up the string of fence, which caused them to look up the outside, and they saw an Indian coming right down the string of fence on the outside, with his bow hanging on his shoulder, they just stuck the muzzles of their guns through the cracks of the fence and when the Indian got right opposite the boys he stopped and straightened up, looking right over the boys at the horses. Just at this time the boys fired both barrels of their guns, but the Indian ran off unhurt. The next day Campbell and myself were over there trailing around after the Indian to see if we could find any blood on the trail. Parker told me he could see the Indian's eyes when he shot, but after failing to find any blood, we came back and found that they had shot twigs off of trees fifteen feet above the ground in about thirty yards of where they were standing.

When this country was first settling up a good many went into the hog-raising business, as they did not think the Indians would steal them, and further, it required so little capital to start with. There were Hamsley, Wilson, Parker, Davis and Henderson and many others too numerous to mention who bought up a few hogs and went into the hog-raising business, and it was but a little while until the woods were full of hogs. It is strange that now we hardly ever see a good acorn mast. In those days the timber was always full of acorns, and we killed our hogs fattened on the mast, which made good bacon. After a year or two the country got full of hogs, and there came a dry summer and the post oak mast fell short, and the hogs began to drift down Hamsley's Creek and other little streams running into North Leon river. At that time there was a blackjack thicket on the north side of the river, about two miles wide and three miles long, running up and down the river, the hogs would drift from the south side to the north side of the river and would land in that blackjack rough. There they found acorns which had fallen off the year before, enough to fatten them so as to make fairly good pork, but by the time they got fat they would be as wild as deer and could not be handled at all. I learned that winter that pork was a fine price down at Belton and contracted with the hog men to kill those wild hogs and dress them on the shares. They all were glad to give me one-half the pork to kill and deliver their part at Old Cora. So I hired old man Huckaby, John Tridel and John Blevens to help me; got a good hog-

dog, a wagon and yoke of steers and pulled out to North Leon river. We struck camp on the north side in the edge of the bottom; made a log-heap fire; cleared off the snow and dried a place to stretch our tent. We would get up before daylight and have breakfast over and by daylight be in that rough on a hog trail. When the dog would get up with the hogs, if they were not too wild they would rally and fight the dog, and we could kill the whole bunch in a pile; but sometimes we would strike a bunch that were so wild they would not rally, but keep running and the dog would catch one and we would shoot him, our dog would then lite out for another and keep this up until we got most of the bunch, then we would send one man back to camp after the wagon and the other two would proceed to collect our dead hogs together by tying a rope to our saddle horns and fastening the other end to a hog and take him to a loading place. By the time the wagon arrived we would have them all in a pile and would load up and return to camp. Old man Huckaby being the older man, was always left at camp to do our cooking and have hot rocks to heat water for scalding the hogs. I do not remember just how long we were camped in that place killing hogs, but it was some time, and we killed about one thousand pounds of dressed pork a day on an average. My part of the pork that I killed that winter, after paying the three hands I had to help me at one dollar a day, and the expense of delivering the pork at Belton, cleared me \$200 for the four or five weeks' work.

One night while out on this hog-killing expedition, we got in late with a big load of hogs and by the time we could get water hot and ready for cleaning the hogs it was dark and when we were through and had the hogs hung on poles it was near midnight; Huckaby, John Tridel and I had to take the entrails out. While we were doing this, John Blevins cleared off the platform on which we had scraped the hogs. It was about eighteen inches high all around, but the water and hog hair made a slop about six inches deep. When he got the platform cleared off he lay down on the edge of it and soon was fast asleep. John Tridel said, "Now we will have some fun." He and Blevins had been sleeping together all the winter, and when one would want the other to turn over he would say "spoon." Tridel got right close to him and called out loud, "John, spoon," and Blevins, fast asleep, whirled over clear off the platform down into the hog hair and water. He was a sight to look at. It took him two hours to dry his clothes enough to go to bed. In those days people never got mad at such pranks, and after he got his clothes warm and dry enough to sleep in he enjoyed the joke as much as any of us.

In the years 1857 and '58 this county was becoming pretty thickly settled, with, I think, the most noble-hearted people I ever saw in any country. If one man in the settlement had plenty he saw to it that his neighbors did not suffer. In the two years I have mentioned the Indians were worse than they had ever before been, while some of our citizens were trying to farm and others trying to raise stock we

had a pretty hard time. The only way we had to protect ourselves was to organize minute companies in each settlement and when Indians were reported in the country would fly to our arms and horses and get in after them. The company I belonged to was that of Captain Jas. Cunningham. He had three boys old enough to fight Indians, and they were boys who were always at the right place when there was any scrapping to do. Their names were Aaron, Dave and Dick. They are all living yet in Comanche County. Now reader don't think I am flattering those boys or that I am any way partial to them. I am sure we had just as brave, honorable and high-minded boys all over the country as they were, but I was closely associated with them, not only in this ranger company, but during the first year of the Civil War, when we were mess-mates in the army, and if there is anything short in a man you will find it out in a year in a soldier camp.

During the years 1857 and 1858 the Indians gave Comanche County a great deal of trouble. They seemed to be bent on the murder of the whites more than on stealing horses. There was a man by the name of Ed Forman who lived in North Leon bottom about 5 miles from Cora. He came to town one evening after some coffee, and left the town late in the evening. He was afoot, and when about half way home was attacked by a body of Indians. He was killed and scalped, and from the sign of horse tracks it was supposed there were about fifteen Indians in the bunch. He had evidently seen them coming in full speed on their horses and he being



afoot ran to a thicket, but before he reached it the Indians had shot so many arrows into him that he fell before getting far into the thicket. The next morning there was a party of men out on search for the missing man. Indians having been seen in the country the day before. Every man that could leave home was out on search for the Indians, some of them struck the trail, and in a short time came onto where they had been running and shooting Forman, and trailed him by his own blood until they found him. I do not remember just who were in the crowd that found him. I was not in that bunch, though I got in home that night just before they brought the dead man in. I remember one man who was in the party that found him, it was Mr. Jess Cook, who had a party of men with him, they lived in Bell County, and had been following a trail of the Indians from Bell County, with stolen horses; and were on their return home when they fell in with our boys on this trail. They were with them when they found the dead man, and the boys began to pull the arrows out of his body, one was shot into the back and several of the men tried to pull it out but failed, and this man Cook, from Belton, a very stout man weighing 175 pounds, told me the next day that he had to set one foot on the man to hold him on the ground before he could pull the arrow out. The next day after this man Forman was buried the writer went and brought his wife and children to his home and kept them until they could be sent to their people in Bosque County.

John Baggett was living on a little creek just below the junction of the South and North Leon Rivers. This was the next killing done by the Indians. I don't remember just how long it was after the killing of Forman, that the killing of the Baggett children took place, but it was only a short time. Mr. Baggett had gone to Bosqueville, to mill; he had left his wife and children at home and had carried the only gun on the place with him. It took about three days to make the trip to the mill and back. One day while he was gone two of the children were out playing in the shade of a large live oak tree, some 100 yards from the house, when a party of Indians rode up around them. They shot and killed the boy, who was about 12 years old, and then just rode around the little girl and stuck the points of their arrows into her flesh. The mother called to her to run to the house, which she did, coming to the front door. Her mother told her to run around to the back door as the Indians were trying to shoot in at the front door. So when she got the little girl in and closed the back door, the Indians not knowing but what she had a gun in the house, left. Mrs. Baggett had to go out and get her little dead boy and stay with him until about 9 o'clock in the night. Just think what that poor old mother had to endure. Her husband out and she not knowing but what he was killed also until he got home; and think what a sad thing it must have been to Mr. Baggett to find his little boy a corpse, the little girl with thirteen arrow wounds in her, and her clothes soaked in her own blood, and the mother grieving over her dead and wounded children.

There was an old man by the name of Hicks, who lived in our settlement. We always called him Uncle Joe. He has a son named Franklin Hicks in this county. The old man had a negro man that was a carpenter. That negro hewed out all the frame timbers for the first Methodist Church house in Comanche County. I do not know whether the darkey was coming to work on the house or not, but rather think the house was finished before the negro was killed. Anyway, Hicks had sent the negro or started him to town for something and when the negro had gotten in one and a half or two miles of Comanche town he was attacked by a party of Indians, he ran from them, trying to save his life, but the Indians caught and killed and scalped him. This, I think, was about the last murder committed by the Indians up to the beginning of the war.

Now after telling of some of the Indian killings, I will tell you of some of the trouble the old settlers had with the negroes in this country. This trouble began just after the war of 1861, those things that occurred after the war are not given of my own knowledge, but I feel that I have it correct as I got it from men who were eye-witnesses and if I should make any mistake, it will be so near correct that it will amount to the same thing in effect and there are plenty of people yet living in Comanche county who can testify to this part of my little history.

T. J. Nabors was one of the first to settle in the town of Comanche. He has three sons living in this county yet and two daughters, to-wit: Dora Green and Francis Vernon; had also one other daughter

whose whereabouts I do not know just at this time.

Uncle Jack Nabors, as he was usually called, built a frame house on a lot one block south of the public square and was running it as a hotel, this was the first of its kind kept in the town. His boys were not large enough yet to do the work that he had to have done, so he hired a mulatto negro to do the work around the place, his name was Mose, and I think he belonged to Ship Carnes before the war. That trifling negro from some cause, I never could learn what, but guess it was just because he had gotten his freedom, and wanted to do some mean act, waited one night until the family and all the boarders were fast asleep, then got the oil can and threw oil all over the outside of the house and set it on fire. There was a well right in the "ell" of the house where the cook room ell-ed off from the main building; there were two buckets to draw water with, and to keep the family from being able to put out the fire in case they should wake up, the negro cut the rope and let each bucket, rope and all, down into the well before he fired the house, and after firing the house he went through a room where two of the little boys were sleeping, and with a knife cut each of the boys' throats, then lit out for the woods. Some of the family and one of the boarders were awakened by the rays of the burning house and raised the alarm in time for all that were alive to get out and save their lives, and they succeeded in getting the two boys out that had been killed before the fire reached them. When daylight came the whole town was out and searching the country in every direction

for the negro. They knew he had done the killing and burning, by his being absent from his place of work in the morning. I think the party that found the negro was composed of Riley Huffman, Andy Stewart, Hade Carnes and perhaps one or two more. They came up with him about six miles below Comanche, on the east side of Indian Creek, and ordered him to stand until they tied his hands. One of the boys got a rein off of his bridle and Andy Stewart, I think it was, started to walk up to him with the strap in his hand, when the negro saw he was going to be tied he drew a big knife and made for the man with the tie strap in his hand, and they said the negro would have killed him had not one of the boys, I think it was Hade Carnes, shot him down in his tracks. Afterwards they sent men down where the negro was killed and dug a hole and rolled him in and covered him up. The land is in cultivation where he was buried; I think it is in the northeast corner of George Watson's farm. This was the first killing of a white person by a negro in Comanche County.

The whites still put up with a few negroes in this county, hoping that old Mose was the only real mean one they had, but still the colored race kept emigrating until there was a considerable settlement of negroes settled in the northeast corner of the county, also there were several white people living up in that part of the county, and one day one of the white men came to town to get some farm implements; I can't give that man's name, though there are plenty of men in the county who knew him well; anyway,

when he left home his wife was at the wash place washing her clothes, and while there washing, a negro man came along and began to curse and abuse her and finally killed her with a shotgun. In a few hours the news reached her husband in Comanche. Then as fast as the men in town could get their horses saddled, three and four at a time left at full speed for where this woman was murdered, some fifteen or eighteen miles from the town. The news soon reached all over the county and every man who could leave home or get a horse to ride was in the woods hunting for the negro. Finally one of the scouts struck his trail and stayed with it until they found the negro. I was not in this county when those negro crimes were committed. **I can't tell just** how long it was from the time the negro killed the lady, I think it was two days, at any rate the crowd who were hunting him soon got together. Now reader I am not certain of the fact but I think the one who gave me the particulars said the crowd gave the husband of the murdered woman the right to say what sort of death the negro should die. They soon had that part of the business settled, and about that time the sheriff and a deputy or two rode up to see what to do with the negro but they soon found they had nothing to do with him. So they rode off and the crowd hung him to a limb. After the negro was hung one man caught the attention of the crowd and made a short speech as follows: "Boys, this is the second killing of white people by the negroes and it is more than the people of Comanche will put up with, so I propose that we give the colored race a



reasonable time to get out of the country, never to return, and that we never allow one of the color to settle in the county." After having made his talk he just stepped forward and called out: "Every man who favors this proposition form on my right," and it was only a few seconds until they were all in a line. They decided at once on the number of days they would allow the negroes to wind up their business and get out. I don't know just how many days they gave them, but was told that some of them didn't claim more than half of the allotted time. So I can say until the present time that Comanche County is the home of white people strictly, and always will be, and the rising generation has just as great a dislike for the negroes as the old settlers who drove them out.

Comanche County has a great deal of good farming land in it and fine water and timber. This is one cause of land being so high and another cause is that it is a white man's country strictly, and always will be. There is a kind of malaria in this county that affects the negro so suddenly that he can't stay over very long at a time. However, I don't think that any race of people ought to be mistreated on account of their color, but when they are guilty of such crimes as they were in this county they deserved to be driven out and kept out.

When I first settled on Mountain Creek, near Newberg, I did not try to farm as I had no family but my wife and self, so I would split rails for those who were putting in farms through the fall and winter, and in the spring run cattle for the cattle men. I

remember one winter old man Watson, my wife's father, and myself split rails about three weeks in post oak timber. Watson cut the timber and I split the rails and the two of us made some 600 rails a day the week round. This may sound like a heap of rails for two men to make in a day, but there are yet witnesses in Comanche County that will tell you that we did the work. In the Spring when cow hunting began, I got a job, the two years I lived on Mountain Creek, with Charley Campbell. We used to have a great deal of fun on our cow hunts. About as funny a thing as I found on a cow hunt took place on Logan Creek about a mile from where Joel Nabors now lives. A man by the name of Allsup, who was about 40 years of age, had just come from the state of Missouri, and had been here but a short time till he married a Miss Chison, who was about 30 years old. After getting married, having a little money, \$400 or \$500, and cattle being cheap those days, he thought he would invest in cattle. He bought about 85 head. When cow hunting began in the spring the cow men would always get together when they went on a five or six days' hunt. So this man Allsup was a kind of a fine haired man and just married, also fresh from the old states, could not think of setting down around a camp fire and broiling meat and eating like the other cowboys, had his wife to bake him two large round pones of lightbread and grind up a little coffee and put in a little sack of sugar to sweeten his coffee, and boil a ham. He could not think of carrying his grub in a little old black, greasy wallet, like the rest of us did, so having a pair of old-time

saddle pockets that he had brought with him from Missouri, he put the two ponies of lightbread in one end of his saddle pockets and a boiled ham in the other end of the pockets and stuffed his sugar and coffee in the corners. When we stopped for dinner we all threw our saddles off and made a fire, cut sticks and began to broil meat. Down on the ground we sat with our meat and cold biscuit and black coffee and began eating. Some one had missed Allsup, and looking around they saw him about thirty steps off in the shade of a tree, eating his dinner. That night we penned the cattle rounded up during the day in Mr. Logan's pen and went down on the creek a little ways and camped for the night. Allsup still ate off to himself. We had two boys with us, and they were mischievous you need not doubt it; those boys were Lee Ruberth and Bob Tompstley. Lee Ruberth is, or was a short time back, living in Coryell County. Those boys decided that night that they would have a little fun at Allsup's expense. So they got up the next morning before daylight and cut two small forks and stuck them in the ground and then they made a crank of a bent stick, like a grindstone crank, and got one of Allsup's ponies of lightbread out of his saddle pocket, cut a hole through the center of it, and hung it like a grindstone. When daylight came and the crowd began to get up, these two boys were standing out a little to one side grinding their knives on Allsup's pony of lightbread. Had it ground about half away. Of course everybody began to laugh and holler at the sight, but Mr. Allsup began to rave and curse and

said that he would whip them both. But Campbell interfered and stopped him by telling him he could not hurt those boys, that if he wanted to raise cattle and have the help of other cow men, he must learn when in Rome he must do as the Romans do. So Allsup got quiet over the matter and before we got off that trip he would eat a piece of broiled beef at the camp fire as well as any of the boys.

After the town of Comanche was located, and the business of the county was moved from Cora, the old county seat, John McGuyer was elected sheriff. He was the third elected sheriff of the county. Before that other sheriffs had no use for a deputy. There were so few people in the county that the sheriff could do all the business himself, but by this time the county had a considerable settlement in it and John McGuyer wanted a deputy, and he asked me if I would serve as a deputy. At that time I was living down at Old Cora. So I gave a \$150 bond with Charley Campbell and Ship Carnes on my bond, Sam Steele, who lived at Cora, was Justice of the Peace in that beat, that portion being the thickest settled part of the county, it gave Steele and myself quite a lot of business, and at the time I did not know any of the duties of the sheriff's office. But like old David Crockett, I was determined to know that I was right and then go ahead. At that time there was nothing like a printed form for any kind of business. So I went to T. C. Frost, a friend of mine, a young lawyer, and he told me he would write a form for me any time anything came into my hand that I did not understand. The first papers that

came to me were a lot of citations. Of course I had nothing to do but hunt up the parties and serve the papers and make my returns on the same; how and when I had served them. Soon I had a lot of notes sent to me for collection, so I went to see all the parties and some of them paid their notes off and others I had to sue. One of those notes was on a man by the name of Tinker and in favor of old Uncle Dick Carnes. Tinker had left the county and was living in McLennan County. So I was up against it, now I could not get him by publication, for there was not a paper published in a hundred miles of me. I studied out this problem myself. I had Justice Steele to issue a citation for Tinker and I mailed it to the sheriff of McLennan County. When the day of trial came the defendant was not there, so the magistrate had to render a judgment in favor of plaintiff. The next thing was an execution to levy on the property, and sell same until the debt was paid. I knew that Tinker had nothing but a house and lot in the town of Cora. He had a wood shop on the same lot. I knew that he could hold that as a homestead. So I told Carnes that he would have to point out property, that I could find nothing but his homestead. So he said I could sell it, and also said I point it out to you, and order you to levy on and sell the same. I said alright Uncle Dick I will attend to it at once. So I mounted my horse early next morning and lit out to Comanche, went into T. C. Frost's office and made my troubles known to him. He said I could sell the homestead, by having Carnes to sign an indemnity bond. I didn't know any more what

kind of an instrument that was than a goose. I said to Frost: "What kind of a critter is that?" After a big laugh he wrote forms for all kinds of business that was likely to come into my hands while discharging my duties as deputy sheriff. When I asked Carnes to sign this bond he did not want to do it. But I told him that I would not sell the property unless he did so; he was somewhat bothered as well as I had been, though thinking that Tinker would perhaps not come back he signed the bond and I advertised and sold the property.

When Tinker came home he came to me to know how I had sold him out, so I showed him the bond I had Carnes to sign and then he asked me how to proceed, how to get his home back. By this time I had learned more about law and business than I had ever known or perhaps ever would have known, if I had not taken the deputyship as sheriff; so I told Tinker to go to Bany Ellis and file suit against Carnes for damages, and he did so, and in a few days a citation to Richard Carnes came to me and as I lived in three hundred yards of Carnes, I just walked up to his house and showed him the papers. He was surprised. He said: "Cross, that house and lot and everything on it isn't worth \$150, and he has sued for \$500 damages." I told him that he was in the hole; that if I had sold that house and lot like he wanted me to, it would have had me in the hole. I told him there was only one way to get out of it, and that was to compromise with Tinker before the day of trial. He said the old man is mad now and I can't do anything with him. I said, "Uncle Dick, tell me what



you are willing to do and I will try to get him to compromise." The debt that Tinker owed Carnes was \$40.00, and when I sold the house and lot it brought \$75.00. It paid the debt and cost of suit, leaving \$23.00 that I had placed in the hands of Uncle Dick Tomksley, who was the first County Treasurer of this County. Mr. Carnes said, "I am willing to give him what he is due me (\$40.00) and turn his stuff all back to him." I told him that I knew that Tinker would not pay the cost. Carnes then agreed to settle the cost also. So I went and told Mr. Tinker what Carnes had promised to do, and advised him to accept it. He, Tinker, was a little stubborn about it, but when I told him that when it came into court the property would not be valued at one-fourth what he had sued for, and there were some chances for him to have to pay some of the cost; he decided to compromise. Uncle Dick Carnes was sure he would get the place back for \$75.00, as it was his son-in-law that bought it at the sheriff's sale, but I was told that his son-in-law, Tom Matthews, made him pay him \$20.00 before he would give up the house and lot, after paying his purchase money back.

Now reader you will pardon me for giving an account of my official duties in those days. I only write it in defense of the early settlers of Comanche County, for the people of this county are now, and always have been, a law-abiding people. The reason why I give this sketch is to publicly answer private questions that have been asked me of men who came into this county in later days. Those questions are as follows: Did you not often take the law into your

own hands in those early days, such as having vigilant committees and organized mobs? To this I answer: Nay. True I am frank to admit that owing to the blackness and awfulness of a few crimes committed in the country, the good people of the county were forced to reach out a little beyond the limits of the law, however, those cases were mostly among the colored race and have been spoken of before in this book.

The first year of the Civil War the Comanche boys, or at least some of us, joined a regiment of State soldiers. Col. Norris of Waco got a notice from the governor to get up a regiment for frontier protection. One company was made up of men from Lampasas, Coryell and Comanche Counties, with a few men from Hamilton County. We all came together in the upper part of Hamilton County and there elected our officers from Captain down to Corporal. Frank Collier of Comanche County was elected captain of the company. William Roag of Lampasas was elected first lieutenant; William Perryman, second lieutenant; Dr. Robinson of Comanche County, third lieutenant; and below are the names of the boys who went out in this regiment from Comanche County. It has been so long I may have forgotten some, though I think I can name the most of them. They were Frank Collier, Aaron Cunningham, Grandville Hachworth, William Watson, James Sanderford, Chas. Isham, David Carnes, Leonard Coker, Alec Tuggle, Dr. Robinson, James Baggett, Jack Wright, T. C. Wright, T. M. Cross, Levi Tuggle and Bob Marshall. This last man on the list was

nick-named while in the army. He was so dirty with his cooking that the boys called him Hog Marshall, and he went by that name a long time after the war. He was a noble-hearted, good boy, though, and when it came to fighting Indians he was always at his place, as cool and as brave a man as Comanche ever sent out. Some of the boys returned after the twelve months were out, and some went into Col. McCord's regiment of Confederate soldiers. Low Tuggle died while in the army, of winter fever, and James Baggett, while on a scout, got after a wild turkey; he ran up to the turkey and the horse got to pitching and threw him off and his gun, which was hanging to the horn of his saddle, went off, sending the bullet through his head, killing him instantly. So he and Low Tuggle are two of Comanche's brave boys that are today sleeping in the quiet tombs at old Camp Colorado, in the east edge of Coleman County. Low Tuggle has one brother and one sister yet living in Comanche County. Thomas Tuggle and Mrs. Criswell, if any of James Baggett's family are living, I don't know anything of them, he was a brother to the little Baggett boy that was killed by the Indians on Leon River, which circumstance has already been given in this book.

I have written something about the first settlers of this country and their hardships. I will now give a short sketch of some of their enjoyments and amusements. I will begin with Uncle Ship Carnes. He was a great fellow for hunting and killing deer and turkeys and while he lived at Cora he killed a great many deer. In the summer season the deer

left the timber and gathered in small bunches out on the prairie between the Leon and Cowhouse so a man could not slip up on them to get within rifle-shot. They could see a man a mile and a half in every direction. So Uncle Ship studied up a plan to get close enough to kill them. He got a large beef-hide and stretched it tight and dried it until it was a flint hide. Then he got a set of plow harness and a single-tree and hitched his old grey horse to the beef hide and he would go out to the Cowhouse prairie and when he saw a bunch of deer he would hitch his old grey horse to the hide, put a small bell on the horse and sit down on the hide and with his rope line he would drive the horse up within a few hundred yards of the deer, then just sit there on the hide with his gun in his hand and let the horse graze around and the deer hearing the bell and seeing the horse would let them come up within gunshot and Carnes would kill one. He seldom failed to get a deer when he went out on his beef hide.

After Comanche became a right smart little town old Uncle Ship Carnes thought he would try the milling and distilling business a while, so he went over on Rush Creek, north of Comanche, and put up his little business and began work. He had a span of mules which he thought a great deal of, to do his hauling around the place. Those mules were a very fine span for those days. Stock at that time were not graded up as they are now. About the same time Ship's brother, Clate Carnes, then a young, able-bodied man, settled a place not far off and put in a nice little farm and raised as fine corn as you ever

saw. Ship Carnes had let his mules out on the range for a while, having no use for them, and one day Clate found Ship's mules in his corn field when the corn was in full roasting ears. Clate drove the mules to his brother and told him he would have to keep them up, that he had a good fence and they would just break over anywhere they came to it. His brother, Ship, said he would try to keep them out, but the next morning Clate found the mules in his corn again. He took them back to his brother the second time and still when he went to his field he found the mules in his corn again. Clate Carnes was always a man of a smooth temper, and easy to get along with, but by this time he was somewhat stirred up. So, finding them in his corn about the third time, he carried rails from the outside and built a square pen right in the middle of the corn field and put the mules in it. When he had built it so high that the mules could not get their heads to the top, he carried heavy rails and locked the corners good and went on about his business. So in five or six days Ship Carnes wanted his mules to haul something, he went out on the range and could not find them. After hunting about two days he thought perhaps they had gotten into Clate's field again, so he went to the field and looked all around the fence for their tracks. He could not see any sign of them, but just before he left he heard one of the mules bray right in the middle of the field, so he hitched his horse and went into the field afoot, and after hunting a good while he came onto them in the high pen. He just took his mules home and never said a word

to Clate about it, neither did his mules ever get into Clate's field any more. Somehow they got tired of that field.

When the war was over and I came back to Comanche County I bought a place of one hundred and sixty acres of land from Dave Carnes. It lay on South Leon about three miles above Newberg. This was as fine a piece of land as there was in Comanche County. It is right in the center of the big farm known as the old Cox place. When I bought that place it had a house on it and a dug well in the yard and ten acres of land in cultivation. I bought it for three hundred dollars, and every foot was first-class land. In the spring, after I had planted that little field in corn and it was up big enough to plow, I took a notion to go down in Navarro County and haul freight that summer as there was good money in freighting. So I let a negro fellow have the corn to cultivate and gather on the halves. The day before I left Dave Carnes was over to see me and told me if I would come over to Comanche before I left he and his wife would sign a deed to the land, but I wanted to get off and told him that we could attend to that in the fall when I got back. So just went on without the deed.

I found Navarro County a fine farming country and a good place to make money, and I stayed down there four years. However, the winter after I left my place in Comanche County I was going down to Bryant Station after a load of freight for Spring Hill and on the way down I met Joel Nabors. Dick Keyser and Bob Marshall all loaded with freight for Co.



manche. As it was about dark when we met, we camped together for the night and I made Keyser agent for my place in Comanche county, as he lived close by. I told him to rent it for me and look after my place till I came back; which he agreed to do. He asked me what he should do with the rent corn that was then on the place. I told him to sell it and pay the money to Dave Carnes. He said there was about \$50.00 worth of corn and as he had to buy corn he would take it and pay the money to Carnes. I told him to just run the place that way until I moved back. I remained in Navarro County four years, thinking what a nice place I had in Comanche County.

About this time I got a letter from my father in Bell County, telling me that he had a good stock of cattle and was getting too old to run after them; that if I would come down there and take charge of the cattle he would give me a half interest in the stock. I knew that was a good lay, so went down to Bell County and engaged in the stock business. When I reached Bell County and got things shaped up all right I went up to Comanche intending to fix up my land deed and to try to lease the place to some one for about three years. I found, however, that Dave Carnes' wife had died and the deed was in a little girl who had grown up to womanhood; the place that I had lost by a little negligence was then worth a thousand dollars. Today it is worth six or seven thousand dollars.

There are also six acres of land lying in the center of Alvin's farm at Old Cora, just east of the pub-

lie well, that justly belongs to me. I bought it from T. C. Frost and paid him the money for it. I had a deed to that place, although I had not put it on record. Also my father had about thirty-three acres of land where the first steam mill in the county was built. It lay on each side of the river. If he ever sold that place I have no knowledge of it, although he may have sold it in the time of the war, but the record doesn't show any deed from J. M. Cross to anyone for that land. So you see what a little carelessness does for a man. I have no kick coming, however, it was all my own fault. If there is anything that I hate to hear, it is a chronic growler. It is all gone and I am still living and as happy as a big sunflower.

Now reader allow me to write a page or two on corrections of a few things I have written in giving the early history of Comanche County. One of these mistakes was in the write-up of the negro burning Nabors' house. Joel Nabors tells me that the negro also killed two colored girls in the house and the building burned down on them. I had heard that before, although I had not put it in the first write-up. Also that it was George McCarney and Guy Carnes who were with Hod Carnes when the negro was killed. These are the men instead of Andrew Stewart and Riley Huffman, as I had first given it. Also in the case of the negro killing the white lady in the county up north of Comanche, Joel Nabors told me that her husband was named Williams. After seeing Nabors I met another man who told me that the man was named Stevens and he affirmed it by saying that

he knew what he was talking about for he was at the hanging of the negro; so I just gave it as I got it. They both agreed on the lady being the daughter of Mr. Hulsey, who is yet living in this county.

Now to the people of Comanche County who may read this book, I will just say that I have only written of the early settling of the county and given a description of the county, the early prices of land and the wonderful supply of wild game and the Indian troubles that occurred while I was living in the County. So I will now ring off for a while, as I want to write up the early history of Brown County. I will have to speak of some things that occurred in Comanche County while writing up other counties. If any of the old settlers of Comanche County find any errors in the record of facts given, they will know it is an honest mistake, as it amounts to the same in substance.

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## **BROWN COUNTY.**

I will now try to give you some of the early happenings of Brown County. I have written up the early days of Milam, Bell, Lampasas, Coryell, Hamilton and Comanche counties and can say of a truth that Milam County was the only one of the group mentioned that was organized or had anyone living

in it when I first came. Brown County had a few families to settle there while I was living in Comanche, although I had scouted the country over before a white man ever settled in that section. So I think I can give a very correct history of its early days.

The first parties to settle on the Bayou, near where Brownwood now is, were Judge Fisk, Col. Adams and Welcome Chandler. Chandler lived on the east side of the Bayou on what is now known as the Swinden Farm. Fisk and Adams lived on the west side of the Bayou. The town now covers each of their places. When Judge Fisk was building his rock house in time of the war someone asked him why did he cover one side of the house with pine shingles. He said because he wanted to see which would last the longest, so he would know which to use in the future. He was then seventy years old; he was always a lively and good humored old man. The old stone building is still standing and I suppose the shingles are alright yet.

The first hotel in Brownwood was erected and kept by one Mr. Hodge. He was the husband of Grandma Hodge, who is still living in Brownwood. The house had the name of the Star Hotel. Mrs. Hodge is still enjoying reasonably good health, and is very interesting to anyone when talking of the early days. She is loved by every one who knows her; and just here I want to say that the ladies of the early settling of our country deserve as much credit for their heroism as the men, for they really had the hardest cross to bear, to stay at home and take care of things while the men were after the Indians.

Brown County was partly organized three years before the war began though it was not completed until after the close of the war. I know the first District Court that was held after the war was three miles below where the town now is. The county seat was first located down there on old Uncle Billy Connell's place. It was there that the first District Court was held and at the time I was living on the Jim Ned, near Thrifty. Mr. McCulloch and myself were summoned on the Petit Jury. So when the Court convened we were there. The Court House was a little log cabin about three hundred yards from Billy Connell's house. After the Judge had charged the Grand Jury he called up the Petit Jury and called over the list and we all answered to our names, then the court adjourned until nine o'clock next morning. The judge and the attorney and lawyers all went out to Mr. Connell's for the night, and the rest of us who were summoned to attend court just camped at the court house. We took our horses across a slough and hobbled them in a low valley. We thought we had them hidden from the Indians, but were mistaken, for the next morning we found that the Indians had been among them and had stolen my horse and Mr. McCulloch's. Those two horses had gotten out on the high ground. They did not find the rest of the horses. So Mack and I borrowed horses from Brooks Lee and Dan Moseley and David Lee went with us. We hit their trail and found that they had crossed the Bayou and were making down the divide between Indian Creek and the Bayou. After about six miles the trail turned east, we then

knew that they were going down the country to steal more horses. So we kept the trail and it went right down that high bluff by Dick Grady's house. We followed the trail on below where Goldthwaite now is. Dan Mosley was almost equal to a bloodhound on a trail, though here they began to scatter, so we could not trail them any further. We then notified the few settlers that we saw that the Indians were in the country, and turned back for home. On our way back we struck another trail going out from the settlements and followed it until we came to where the Indians camped all night. There we found that we were on a cold trail, so turned back. We were then up on Clear Creek. When we got back to the Mullens ranch, what is now called Thrifty, McCulloch and myself stopped at home and sent our borrowed horses home by Moseley and Lee. I have never heard from that term of District Court from the day I left until now. If I was fined for my non-attendance the next morning I have not yet been notified of the fact.

In the winter of 1861 my father, Kingsbury and myself, all then living in Comanche County, thought we would buy a drove of hogs and fatten them for the market, after driving them to Chappel Hill, in Washington County. So we went up in Brown County to buy the hogs. There we made headquarters at Mr. Chandler's, about a mile East of where Brownwood now is, on the east side of the Bayou. Chandler had a stock field, and when we bought a bunch of hogs we had them delivered in that field. We got about a hundred and fifty head and drove



them down to old Uncle Billy Brown's and penned there the first night, going from there on to Chappel Hill. I only speak of this hog business that the reader may know that I was here and that I knew who else was here at that time. I bought hogs from every man on the Bayou, who were as follows: Chandler, Adams, Harris, Clemons, Roberts, Baugh, Anderson and Press Brewer. Those are the men we saw on that trip. There were a few more families above and below on the Bayou, also some settlers out on small creeks in the country. Before the country was settled up the Pecan Bayou valley was the most beautiful scene I ever saw. There was no brush on it. You could see a turkey as far as your eyes could tell what it was. After the country had begun to settle and the fire was kept out, we did not have the prairie grass burned off. It was then that the mesquite timber began to grow up. In a few years the Bayou valley was a solid mesquite growth large enough to make fence posts. There is nothing in the way of land marks in the country today that looks anything like what they used to except the little round mountain and the bluff with those little red sand rocks on them.

The first Indian fight that occurred in Brown County after it was organized was in the valley south of Welcome Chandler's. The place is now called the Swinden farm. One of Mr. Chandler's negroes saw the Indians rounding up the horses in the valley and gave the alarm. There was Sut. Harris and three or four other men at the house, but

they had nothing besides their side arms, no long-range guns. They went out to attack the Indians, but they were too strong for them, and soon forced them to get back to the house. The Indians took the horses and went up the Bayou on the east side, going in the direction of Delaware. After they had gone six or seven miles they came across Capt. John Conner and two other men, who were traveling a trail leading from Comanche to Old Colorado Post. The Indians charged them, and shot one of Conner's men, badly wounding him. At the first of the fight the other man, I think his name was Williams, in order to defend his wounded companion, dismounted and killed one Indian. The Indians succeeded in getting his horse, and then left them. The wounded man was taken to Chandler's house, where he lay about three months before he recovered. I was traveling that trail a few days after the fight and found some of Capt. Conner's papers scattered on the battle ground.

The first trouble that occurred among the early settlers of this country, in which firearms were used, was between Sut Harris and Bural Roberts, which ended in Harris shooting and killing Roberts, and a man by the name of Anderson shot Harris, inflicting a wound from which he died in a few days. Anderson seemed not to be concerned in the difficulty; why he shot Harris no one could tell. Anderson left the country and has never been heard of since. The next killing, to the best of my recollection, was Clements and Isaacs. This took place on the Bayou

at Clements' house, about one and one-half miles above Brownwood. I think Isaacs was a brother to Clements' wife. I never knew what brought up the difficulty, though Isaacs had been living with Clements for a long time and was an old bachelor. The difficulty arose at the dinner table, they both sprang up from the table with knives in their hands, and cut each other to death, both dying at once.

Brown County was settled up as a general thing by a high-minded class of citizenship, and at this writing, with its vastly increased population, they are still considered a law-abiding people. The county officers always used their best endeavors to try to keep down crime, but for a few years, between 1880 and 1887, there was considerable trouble between the stockmen and the farmers, mostly caused by the country being fenced up with barbed wire. It resulted in the death of several men, and a long law suit for many others. I shall not try to give any of the particulars of this trouble for two reasons; first, that I was living in Bell County at that time, and only got what I know from heresay. The newspapers did not say much about it. This is my reason for not giving any names or particulars. My other reason is that these old troubles have passed away, the tomahawk buried, doth rest in the ground, and peace and good will prevail among the people; so I leave everything quiet as it is.

Now as to the spiritual interests of Brown County in its early days: The first Methodist preacher was called Brother H. Childress; he was sent to the

extreme frontier, and was better known in those days as the "bear hunter preacher." His appointments on the circuit were as follows: First at the Beazley crossing on the Colorado River; from there down the river to Hanna Valley, what is now called Regency; then down to a private house near the old Williams ranch; from there around by Blanket Springs; then up the Bayou by Clements' house, above Brownwood; and from there to his last appointment at John Mullens' ranch near Thrifty. At this place the first Methodist church in Brown County was organized. There are five of those old members yet living, to-wit: Mrs. Mullens, the wife of Uncle Billie Mullens, of Lampasas County; Jane Cross, wife of R. Y. Cross, who lives with Neal Shore three miles above Thrifty; John Mullens and wife living near Thrifty, and myself, living at Blanket. I am glad to say that those old members all have a bright hope of a very near future.

Just after the close of the war I went with Bro. Childress the whole round on his circuit, as the Indians were often passing through the country and everybody had to carry arms. This old preacher always carried a shotgun and a six-shooter. I saw him often go into the house where he was to preach on Sunday and set his gun up against the wall and lay his six-shooter down under the table, get out his book and go to preaching. It did not seem to embarrass him in any way.

The first camp meeting held in the county was on Jim Ned Creek about one and a half miles above Thrifty. It was conducted by Elder Johnson, of

Meridian, and Rev. Groves, of Comanche. Johnson was the first elder that presided in the county. Uncle Charley Mullins, who is the father of John Mullins, of Thrifty, was at that meeting. He had been blind for years, but was full of life and enjoyed the meeting as well as any of the young people. This camp meeting took place during the first year after the war.

Now after having given this sketch history of seven counties, beginning at Milam and closing with Brown County, the rest of this book will be of incidents I did not get as I first wrote up the counties. Those things that have come to my mind since I began the work. I will also tell some things that occurred in the time of, and just after the war, though the facts will all be connected with these counties, and will be as interesting as any other part of the book.

Every history and sketch that I have ever seen have given great honor to the old men who came to Texas in the early days, drove the Indians out of the country and brought about civilization, opening up the way for those who came later on and for the rising generation of the grand State of Texas. Yet I have never seen a word of credit spoken for the women of the early settlers, who, I think, are entitled to as much honor and credit as the men, if not more. Now I want to say just here, that the old settlers' wives and daughters had just as hard a time as the men. There was Miss Whitney, the young lady who was murdered in the school house in Hamilton County. She could have left the house and taken shelter

in the bottoms and thickets on the creek. She would not leave the small children to be killed, but sent the larger children to the brush and stayed and sacrificed her own life for the little children. No man ever made a greater sacrifice than she did. Another incident was that of Mrs. Taylor, of Bell County; when the Indians were all around trying to get to the door and break into the house and Mr. Taylor and the boys watching at the port holes with their guns standing the Indians off as best they could, this Mrs. Taylor was moulding bullets for the old man and boys, and when the Indians fired the east end of the building and it burned to the little hall between there and the room they were in, Mrs. Taylor lay her bullet moulds down and drew the dining table up in the corner; standing on the table she opened a hole through the roof and had the children hand her what water they had; when the water gave out she called for all the milk they had in the house and with that she put the fire out, so saving the whole family from perishing in the flames. Just think of that old lady standing on the table with her head and shoulders above the roof and the Indians shooting arrows at her all the time she was putting out the fire. No man ever had more presence of mind or took more desperate chances than that old woman.

I have just taken those two circumstances the second time in order to illustrate what I have to say of the women. All the incidents in this chapter are things that happened right along in the counties I am giving the history of. There never was a time when the Indians made a raid on the settlements that



the women did not suffer as much as the men, if not from loss of blood, it was from loss of sleep and uneasiness. Just think of the old lady Baggett, of Comanche County, standing watch over her murdered boy for several hours before she had anyone to help her bear her burden. I honestly believe, from what I have read in the history of the Indian Depredations in Texas, that there has been as much suffering among the women as there was among the men.

In the year 1866 I moved from Brown to Navarro County. In the fall of 1871 I moved back to Bell County. By this time it was a considerable farming country. The greater part of the county was yet open and free to stock. For about four years I was in the cattle business. My wife became afflicted with a trouble which ran into consumption. I knew she could not last long and I could not look after my cattle and wait on her, so I sold out my entire stock to a party of northern men. I trusted them for eight thousand dollars which they completely beat me out of, leaving me flat broke, still by good management I have held my own ever since. In the winter of 1875, having lost my wife and being in a pretty hard shape, financially, I came back to Brown County and worked that winter and the next spring for my brother, W. B. Cross. His oldest son, J. R. Cross, came with me from Bell County. My brother had not yet moved his family from Bell County. J. R. and myself improved his place. It is the place that J. R. Cross now lives on. While up there that year I got acquainted with several people who had come in after I had left there. At this place my

brother, W. B. Cross, had bought 2,500 acres of land from Judge Fisk. His son-in-law, Dr. Lane, purchased a little place on the same tract of land. He had built a little log house on this place and moved his family up there. J. R. Cross and myself boarded with him while we were at work for my brother. At that time the citizens living in that community were as follows: Dr. Lane, Mick Stover, Ike Stover, Joe Rennick and old Uncle Van. I have forgotten his given name. On McAnnally Creek was old Capt. Woods, W. M. Bratton, Thomas Inman, Louis McCord, and Sam Hodge. Between this settlement and Brownwood was one house, that was where Dan Mosely lived. Just about the time I left R. D. Forsythe moved into this settlement and settled the place he is now on. Forsythe was one of the best financiers that ever struck this country. When he landed here he was comparatively a poor man, but being strictly honest in his dealings with everybody was soon in good circumstances. Should he or any of his offspring read this book I don't want them to think that I am writing this as flattery. I know just what I am writing. There never was a man that was trying to live right, I care not what his troubles were, if he went to R. D. Forsythe he got the help he wanted.

Now as I am writing up Brown County, and have before said that everything in this book would be of my own personal knowledge, I will state here that the last desperate murdering by the Indians that took place in Brown County before the war, has been written up for a Brownwood paper by a friend and

Brownwood man, Mr. Henry Ford, (whose death occurred on the 10th of March of this year) and as I was at that time in Comanche County, I feel assured that Mr. Ford has it more correct than I can give it. Having a copy of this paper before me, I will give the story just as he gave it, knowing it to be correct:

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## THE MURDER OF THE JACKSON FAMILY.

“In the early part of the year 1858 a man by the name of Jackson, with his family, settled at what was afterwards known as the Jackson Springs, then in Brown County, now in Mills. The family consisted of himself, his wife, one daughter 18 years of age, and three small children, ranging in ages from 7 to 12 years. Late in the fall of that year, Mr. Jackson took his family out pecan hunting, intending to go to a place on the Bayou where Al Jay and Chas. Kirkpatrick were getting out board timber. They had reached the middle of the Jackson valley, about two and a half miles from home, when they were surprised by a band of Indians, who brutally murdered the father, mother, daughter and youngest child, and carried off the older children, a boy and a girl. When the victims were discovered soon after by the Kirkpatricks their mutilated bodies presented a ghastly spectacle. The young lady had been treated with horrible, fiendish cruelty and was found a short distance from the others with her throat cut. The

alarm was given and a runner sent to Camp Colorado to notify the soldiers who were stationed there. They immediately responded, and Sergeant Alby, with fifteen men, started out to take the trail; the scattered neighbors gathered to perform the sad task of burying the dead. Wrapped in blankets the bodies were buried where they fell; the father and mother in one grave and the two others in another. These lonely graves are still to be seen in the Jackson valley—mute witnesses of the danger which beset the path of the early settlers.

The Indians continued their raid into Coryell County stealing horses and on their way back crossed the mountains near Mercer's Gap into Brown County. Late in the evening of the day they crossed the mountains the mail carrier between Meridian and Brownwood, passing through Mercer's Gap, saw them. He turned back to Elijah Barcroft's place on Mercer's Creek and gave the alarm. The next day Mr. Barcroft, Jas. Barcroft, Dan Cox, (who was afterwards killed in the Dove Creek fight) Thos. Deaton, Wm. Clements, Jesse Bonds, John Carnes, Jas. Holmsley, Sim Welch, Frank Collins, Lon Price and two other men whose names we have been unable to obtain, all from Comanche County, took the trail in the middle of the afternoon. They decided that six of their number go to Salt Gap, which was then a noted Indian pass-way, in hope of intercepting them. The other seven men followed the trail. When near Salt Gap the six men saw the Indians going into Camp on the bank of a Creek at a Spring. The whites dropped back out of sight into a ravine which

they followed until close to the Indians. There they remained until everything was silent in the Indian camp, when they took a survey of the situation, and in doing so ran into the Indians' horse herd, thirty in number, which were quietly grazed out of hearing of the sleeping Indians; they drove them back to Blanket Creek, left them there and returned to the ravine. At day-break they charged the Indians who were up and getting breakfast. The Indians were taken completely by surprise. Don Cox killed one, who fell dead in the creek. The others succeeded in gaining the shelter of a near-by thicket, except one who faced the whites, and standing over the dead body of his comrade discharged arrows so fast and with such accuracy of aim that the whites were forced to take to the shelter of trees. He put eighteen arrows into a tree behind which Wm. Clements was standing, and one through his clothes. Tom Deaton also had one shot through his clothes. Jesse Bonds was shot in the breast. The arrow coming out through his back. Bonds, though desperately wounded, finally recovered. The Indian's supply of arrows was soon exhausted, and he then made a dash for the thicket, badly wounded. The whites withdrew and not having tasted food since leaving home, they started back on the trail. At Cox's Gap they met about thirty men from Coryell County, who were following the trail. From these men they learned that the Jackson family had been murdered, also that the Indians had divided near Cox's Gap, a part of the band diverging a little to the south. It was then decided that the children must be with the Indians

who went in the southerly direction, as they were not seen during the fight. The Coryell men being well supplied with provisions, rested long enough to eat a hasty meal and went back to where the fight took place, incidentally to look up the dead Indians and see if any more had been killed. From there they went south down Salt Creek until they found the other trail, followed it about two miles and found where they had camped the night before. The camp showed evidences of having been hastily abandoned. They then scattered out, following the general direction of the trail. A short distance further one of the men thought he saw a human face peering from a thicket. This he communicated to the others, the thicket was at once surrounded but no signs of life could be seen. Two men were detailed to crawl into the thicket. They had not gone far when they discovered the two children trying to cover themselves with leaves. The children were overjoyed at finding themselves among white men and the pathetic scene that followed was one never to be forgotten by the men who were present. The children were worn out with their terrible experience and the exhausting trip they had made. The little girl's back was covered with freshly made scars where she had been prodded with arrows to make her keep up. From the boy it was learned that when the fight commenced with the other band of Indians the shooting could be plainly heard and the Indians they were with became very much excited and hastily broke camp, leaving them there. The boy and his sister sought the shelter of the thicket in which they were



found, crawled into it and fell asleep. Being awakened by the noise of the passing horsemen, the boy peered out, and thinking that the Indians were coming back for them they undertook to cover themselves with leaves. The two children having been recovered, the whole party returned home. Soon after a married brother came after the children and took them to his home near Round Rock.”

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## THE MURDER OF OLD UNCLE PETER JOHNSON OF COMANCHE COUNTY.

In the year 1858 old Uncle Peter Johnson, who was a very early settler in Comanche County, was on his way to mill (he had to go to Meridian Mills, in Bosque County) to have some wheat ground, having to camp out several nights on the trip, he took his little boy with him. The boy was eleven years old. His name was Peter also—named for his father. Just as they were passing a little round mountain between Leon and Bosque Creeks, a party of Indians charged on them and killed the old man. He was working a yoke of oxen. The Indians shot one of the steers in order to stop the wagon, so they could kill and scalp the old man. (I will state just here that this killing of Mr. Johnson is what gave name to the mountain of Johnson Peak.) After killing and scalping the old man, they took Peter, junior, the eleven-year-old boy and carried him off. I think it was about ten days

that the boy was out. He wandered around in the woods until he was very nearly starved. The Indians tried to make him eat raw meat like they did, but he would not eat it. It is supposed they turned him loose when they saw that they could not make an Indian of him. When they turned him loose they gave him a piece of an old dirty blanket. The weather was very cold, the little fellow knew not which way to go to find a house. One day he heard a bell and went to it, the bell was on a cow, there were a few head of cattle there. The boy had heard his father say that if anyone was lost and would follow a milk cow that she would take him to a house, So he started the cattle and was trying to keep after them, but being so weak and worn out, he could not keep up with the cattle. There were three or four men out on a cow hunt one day after all hope of ever hearing of the little fellow was given up. The cow hunters saw at a distance an object moving around and it attracted their attention. They turned and made to it and found it was the little boy the Indians had captured. He was so weak and so near starved to death that he did not seem to know anything. One of the men took the boy and set him in the front part of his saddle, so he could hold him on the horse and they carried him to Stephenville, which was about ten or twelve miles. They had some cold biscuits in their provision wallets. They gave him one when they found him; he ate on it all the way to Stephenville and had not gotten it all eaten when they reached the town. He was so weak he could not hold his head up. There was a good man there, I

wish I could give his name, though not knowing him personally I have forgotten it, that cared for the boy, had a doctor to treat him until he regained his strength and got alright. His mind also got alright as his strength returned. This boy grew up to manhood and made a good citizen of Comanche County. He died near Gustine, in this County, eight months ago. He had one brother older than himself, Rev. Jesse Johnson, now living near Gustine. A white man and a negro were killed about ten miles below Johnson Peak, on the north side of Leon River, the same day that the subject of this sketch was killed. This murder was supposed to have been done by the same party of Indians.

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### THE KILLING OF MRS. WILLIAMS.

In the year 1873 a family by the name of Williams was living on Sand Creek about three miles southwest of Thrifty. Early one morning while the men-folks were up on the creek after a load of rafters Mrs. Williams was out at the cow lot milking the cows. She took with her a little girl about seven years old, and the baby, about ten months old. The morning being rather cold she made a little brush fire for the children to sit by, and while at the cow lot was surprised by a party of Indians, who shot her full of arrows. When they thought she was dead they took the baby and dragged it through the fire, burning it until they thought it would die, then left,

taking the little girl away with them. The place where this tragedy occurred was known as the hog ranch of W. N. and Zack Adams, but is now known as the Baker place. After the Indians had left, Mrs. Williams yet had life enough to dress the little baby that was so badly burned, but she died in a few minutes after. In a short time her son came home and found his mother murdered and the little baby badly burned. The baby was taken to John Mullins' and kept for about ten days, when it died and was buried with its mother.

R. Y. Cross, W. N. Adams and about fifteen other men whose names I cannot recall just now, headed by R. Y. Cross, took the Indian trail and followed them several days, though they never overtook them. The little girl that the Indians carried off was found hanging to a limb of a tree on Double Mountain Fork of the Brazos River, two hundred miles northwest of Brownwood. The little girl's grave is near the present town of Clarmont. This was among the last of the Indian troubles in this part of the country.

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#### SALT CREEK FIGHT—1859 OR '60.

Someone from the Newburg Settlement was out southwest from Newburg, close to the mountains, and discovered three Indians driving a bunch of horses, twenty-five or thirty head, (which were stolen in Hamilton County.) He ran to Cunningham's ranch and gave the alarm. Old Capt. Cunningham,

who was ever ready for any emergency, summoned a squad of men, six besides himself, named as follows: Aaron Cunningham, David Cunningham, R. T. Cunningham, J. V. Cunningham, Alex Tuggle and Jay Hugh Chism. This party took their trail and followed it until night overtook them near Logan's Gap. They camped near where Whitville is now. In some way they got ahead of the Indians. Some time in the morning, probably about 4 o'clock, the Indians came by the camp. David Cunningham was on horse guard and hearing them pass, quietly drove the horses back to camp and woke the men. They saddled their horses and waited for daylight, then went out to where he had heard them pass and took the trail, and following it about three miles came up with them, eating breakfast near Salt Mountain. It being a dark, foggy morning they got very close before the Indians discovered them. Two of the Indians ran and bridled a horse and made their escape; the third Indian bridled an iron-gray mare, which was a lady's saddle animal. He mounted her bare-back but she threw him off; he mounted her again and she threw him off the second time. By this time David Cunningham got within very close range and shot him down. After wounding him three or four times, Aaron C. gave him the death shot, but had a close call himself, for the Indian was within a few feet of him with his arrow drawn. Aaron said it was a matter of compulsion with him—he had it to do. They recovered all the horses except the one the two Indians rode off, and would have gotten it also had it not been for the fog.

## BROWN'S CREEK FIGHT.

Along in the year 1866 or 1867 the Indians came into the town of Comanche after horses. They were first discovered in the lot of Fletcher Neeley, trying to catch a pair of mules. An Indian got on one of the mules and it threw him off. The noise the Indian and mules made awakened Bill Cunningham, who was boarding with Mr. Neeley. He rushed out and exclaimed: "Look out for your horses; the Indians are getting ours." Then he ran down to Uncle Jack Nabors' and told them. Uncle Jack's daughters, Mary Ann and Fanny, got up and prepared breakfast. All the Indian fighters in town moulded bullets and got their horses ready for the early morning fight. At daylight twelve men found the trail at or near the place where Hilton Burk's new house has just been finished. The trail led out southwest, past where Wm. Reese's residence now stands, it crossed Indian Creek just west of the Brownwood Bridge, and crossed Dry Hollow a quarter of a mile above where John Farmer now lives. They then crossed Mercer Creek where Brushy Gap road now crosses, and went on south in the direction of Potato Hill Mountain. The twelve men waited at this mountain for five more men and a pack of bloodhounds that were coming from Capt. James Cunningham's ranch. After traveling about one-half mile up the San Saba road the men struck the Indians' trail and put the dogs on it. On the trail the Indians had killed a mare belonging to Dick Kiser, further on they killed a beef and took what



they wanted for dinner. One of the hounds got too far ahead and frustrated the end. They left their tempting dinner of roast beef scattered about four miles from there. The squad came up with them at Brown Creek, in Mills County. The fight opened at two o'clock and lasted until dark. During the fight three Indians were shot down, but other Indians came in and carried them off on horses. The fourth and last Indian was killed by Dave Cunningham breaking his back from a distance of eighty yards. The scout camped here for the night. This company was commanded by Capt. James Cunningham, and consisted of seventeen men, namely: David Cunningham, Aaron Cunningham, Bill and Jim Cunningham, Arthur, James and Robert Marshall, R. Kiser, T. D. Cargill, Tom Wright, B. S. Hornsley, Joel Nabors and four others whose names I have forgotten. Their losses were one dog and one horse killed, and Capt. Cunningham was shot in the finger. The Indians numbered some seventeen or eighteen.

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### SANTA ANNA MOUNTAINS.

These mountains, a few miles south of old Camp Colorado post, were used by the soldiers that were first stationed at Camp Colorado, for spy mountains. This was a noted place for Indians to pass as long as they depredated in this country. In 1863 a company of Confederate soldiers were stationed at

Colorado Post; this was the company to which I belonged, and when the Indians would slip down in the settlements and steal horses the people would send a runner to our camp and we would send a party out to those mountains to spy out for them. We would always station the men at a secreted place as near the mountain as possible, and then place a spy on top of the mountain to watch for the Indians. A man on one of those mountains could see a bunch of horsemen a long way off. When the man on the mountain discovered Indians coming he would watch them until he could tell which side of the mountain they were going on, then he would go down to the other men and tell them which side of the mountains the Indians were starting for, and the whites knew just how and where to make the fight. The Indians hardly ever passed those mountains without losing all the stock they had stolen except the horses they were riding. Often Indians were shot and badly wounded but very few were ever killed outright at or near Santa Anna Mountain. The only reason I can give for their lucky escape, is that they would always, when passing out with stolen horses, ride the very best horses they had in the herd, and just outride the white men. I remember one fight that Lieutenant Chandler, of Capt. J. J. Cullen's company, had at Santa Anna Mountain. Chandler had about six men with him, he was not spying from the mountain but when just passing by and near the mountain ran right into a bunch of Comanches. Neither party had seen the other until they were right in gun-shot. The Indians outnumbered the whites about two to one.

This was one of the best fights our boys ever made. They re-captured all the stolen horses, about thirty head, and wounded several Indians, two of which were afterwards found buried on the trail. The whites never got a man wounded, only two of their horses got arrows shot into them and they were not badly hurt.

Salt Mountain is a little mountain on the east side of Brown County, about five miles from the upper line of Comanche County. It was the most noted place for Indian fighting of any in the state. From the time this country began to settle, until the Indians were driven out entirely, there were several fights and a number of them were killed at or near this Salt Mountain. I have never seen any account of the first killing on this noted battle ground and as my object in writing this book is to give the very earliest happenings of our country, I will tell of the first Indian fight near this place.

In the first settling of Lampasas County there was a family living in the community of the town of Lampasas by the name of Mullins. Old Uncle Charley Mullins had three boys, who have been spoken of previously in this book, whose names were Ike, Bill and John. John is the only one of the boys now living. In about the year 1854, as well as I can remember, they moved their cattle and horses out on the head of Brown's Creek, near where the town of Mullin is now, in Mills County. There they built a cabin and made stock pens some forty miles above all settlements. Having the largest stock of horses, they were visited by the Indians more frequently

than the smaller ranches further down the country. They only kept three or four hands to look after and attend to both horses and cattle. The Indians came in one night, rounded up a few head of their horses, and got off with them just before day-light. When the boys saw where they had started with the horses they saddled some others and took the trail. Being well mounted they soon came in sight of the Indians. There were only three of the Indians and when they saw the boys after them they left the stolen horses, all but those they were riding, and pulled for the thickets around Salt Mountain, where the boys ran onto them. The Indians dismounted and took to the brush. Ike Mullins found one of them hidden behind a big rock; the Indian saw he was discovered and sprang up to shoot at Mullins, but Uncle Ike got in his work with a six-shooter first, killing the Indian dead. This was the first Indian killed at Salt Mountain by a white man that we have any account of.

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### THE HOG CREEK FIGHT IN 1869 OR 1870.

Colonel Wm. Stone and Capt. James Homesley started a couple of wagons loaded with wheat to San Saba Mills. The wagons were driven by F. M. Brown and Geo. Wallace, accompanied by Bush Grisom, leaving Comanche and traveling until near sundown they came to the Mustang Water Hole on

Mountain Creek. There they met John Roach and stopped for a few minutes' talk, as men always did in those days, and while they were engaged in their conversation, being near the foot of a mountain, they were surrounded by a band of forty or fifty redskins. Capt. Roach, who was a Confederate soldier and used to warfare, had the wagons corralled as quickly as possible. Then he began cutting the horses loose from the wagons, and moving the drivers, telling them to get away. The horse Capt. Roach was riding was about ridden down, so he took a little mule from one of the wagons, and proceeded to make his escape. One Indian followed him for one-half a mile shooting both Roach and the mule. During the fight at the wagons Frank Brown killed one Indian and Brown was slightly wounded in the face and arm; Geo. Wallace received a slight wound in the arm. Roach's mule carried him about four miles from the wagons to the Watson Spring, and while stopping there for water the mule died. Roach walked two miles further to the Campbell ranch with an arrow in his left lung. He was so weak from loss of blood when he reached the creek bank near the ranch house he could go no further. A negro living at the ranch heard Roach groaning, and went and carried him to the house. Wallace, Grissom and Brown arrived at Comanche that night and spread the alarm. A company of twelve men were on the warpath next morning, starting a scout, meaning to intercept the Indians at the mountains, but failed to do so and returned to where the fight at the wagons occurred. When they arrived at the wagons they found Dave

Cunningham and five others; he and his five men having followed the Indians that morning and had come up with them on the head of Pompey Creek, but the Indians were too much for them and they had returned to carry the wagons back to the ranch and get the bloodhounds and more men. The next morning about 4 o'clock the trail was again taken up. After following the trail for fifteen miles they found where the Indians had camped, and buried one of their number. Passing this up they followed the trail some fifteen miles further and came upon the Indians in camp on Hog Creek, in Brown County. The dogs had been taken from the trail a few miles back, as the men could run the trail without them, so no noise was being made. Leaving the mountain and getting down on smooth ground Capt. Dave Cunningham had his men form a line and charge before the Indians hardly knew they were there. The Indians scattered in every direction, some mounting and some going afoot. There were seven Indians killed in this fight and the company's loss was one man killed and one horse. Freeman Clark was killed and Joel Nabors got his horse killed and one of the blood hounds was killed. This scout was commanded by Capt. Dave Cunningham, with nineteen men, as follows: S. H. Powers, J. J. Johnson, John Albin, W. Cox, Ed. Roach, John Stevens, Bill Ross, James Tunnell, Tom Jones, Lark Stone, Jeff Nabors, Bill Cunningham, Joe Cunningham, J. M. Millican, Freeman Clark, Joe Gurley, Ike Ward, D. P. Pinkard and one whose name I have forgotten.

Everything the Indians had was captured by the scout, also eight head of horses.



In the early spring of 1870 the Indians made a stealing raid in Bell County in the neighborhood of Youngsport. There were four Indians in the bunch and they secured fourteen head of saddle horses, or thirteen horses and one mule; killed one mare belonging to Uncle Dee Lane, being unable to either catch or drive her, they shot her and left her lying with the arrow in her within five hundred yards of the house. They got the mule out of old Parson Henry Casper's lot. It was locked by a chain around its neck and the other end around a snag of a limb which had been blown off some three or four feet above where it forked from the tree, they slipped the loop up until they pushed it over the end of the snag and got off with the mule. Its mate was locked around the body of the tree and they could not get it. When the news got out next morning a posse of eleven men got together to follow the Indians. These were Mr. Tumbaugh, Will Cathey, Milt Parker, Don Tankersley, Tuck Boone, Jake Casper, Jack Wilcox, Abe Ray, Dock Casper, Hiram Teague and my brother, G. B. Cross of Brownwood. These men got mounts and started about 11 o'clock in the morning, but the Indians had evidently scattered out some yards apart in order to avoid being trailed, and it was impossible to make any headway following them. So the men decided they would ride straight ahead for fifteen or twenty miles and probably would find where they had gathered more horses and could trail them better. When they reached where Coperas Cove now is, finding no sign on the north side of the mountains they returned and went due south through

the gap. When on the south side of the range of mountains they struck the trail of the Indians, evidently driving the horses, as some ropes were dragging. The Indians were at that time only about one mile from them, on the mountain, where they had remained all day, waiting to make another haul when night came on, as there was a thick settlement a few miles away, on the Lampasas River. Having a spy on the edge of the mountain they discovered our men had struck their trail and would soon be on them; pulled up camp and left in a full run. When down in the level prairie the wily Indians scattered out some yards apart, leading or riding all the horses, and the grass being high and dry it was impossible to trail faster than a walk; the Indians running and having at least three-fourths of an hour the start, it was useless to follow their trail. Brother and some others in the crowd having followed the Indian trails out before, knew the route they would go for twenty miles or more, and they decided to make a straight run for points twenty miles ahead. In so doing they frequently came onto the trail. Jake Casper was riding the mate to the mule the Indians had stolen; this animal, when it came to its mate's trail, would put its nose to the ground and follow like a dog for some distance, then raise his head and bray. This twenty-mile run was through practically open country, with scattering small hills and groves here and there. They reached a chain of mountains and stayed close to it, keeping on the north side. The boys reached those mountains about half an hour before sundown and where the Indians had crossed one of

those little streams running down from the mountain the bank was so wet it look as if they had not been gone ten minutes. Two of the boys' horses gave out at this point, and one man was suffering with a pain in his side, so they had to leave them. These were Mr. Tumbaugh, Will Cathey and Abel Ray. The other eight began to crowd their horses to the limit, knowing that what they did must be done in the next hour, as it would be dark by that time, and the men had no provisions for themselves or food for their horses, and there was nobody living within miles that they knew of. During the next four or five miles of the run four more horses were failing and the other four had to leave them. This left only Jack Wilcox, Dock Casper, Hiram Teague and G. B. Cross. They whipped through some four miles further, when two of their horses gave out, leaving only Hiram Teague and my brother in the chase. By the time the large stars were showing these two caught a glimpse through the scattering timber of what they made sure were the Indians, and made a hard run across a post oak flat to the open prairie, when they reached it, however, nothing was in sight for a mile ahead. It was bright moonlight and they were satisfied the Indians had seen they were gaining fast and had taken to the roughs of the mountains which lay just on the left. The two waited a few minutes, when they were joined by Dock Casper and Jack Wilcox, and a little later the other four, that had last dropped out, came up. Teague and my brother told the boys what they had seen and they also believed the Indians had taken to the mountains, Jack

Casper said: "We'll see if we are right or not," and began to ride old Pete around and in a few minutes Pete put his head to the ground and started right up the mountain, braying; so all were satisfied that the Indians had seen us following and had avoided our seeing them by keeping some little mound or a grove of timber between them and us. Being without forage for our horses or anything to eat ourselves and knowing the Indians would get a long start of us, we turned back for home, traveling until ten o'clock in the night before we found any house where we could get feed for our horses and something to eat.

This was about the last stealing raid made by the Indians into Bell County, and occurred about the last of February or the first of March, 1870.

My brother says that he was born in January, 1849, in Bell County, which was then the frontier of Texas, and had lived on the extreme frontier all his life, where Indians were common visitors every full moon up to this time, and that he had always had a great desire to get in a scrap with them, and thought sure he was going to have the fun that evening; but dark came too quick. Now he is 61 years old and more considerate, and is feeling glad he did not catch up with the red rascals. This bit of history I glean from some of those that were in the chase and many of them are yet living who can vouch for the story. Dan Tankersley lives at Killeen, Bell County; Jake Casper at Youngsfort, same county; Tuck Boone lives in South Texas, I think in Blanco County; G. B. Cross in Brownwood, and Will Cathey I think is in Bell County near Youngsfort.

## THE DOVE CREEK FIGHT.

This fight took place on Dove Creek near the mouth of South Concho River, between about four hundred Kickapoo Indians and a like number of whites. It was particularly notable from the fact that the attack was made by the whites on friendly Indians. The shedding of blood on that occasion was an unfortunate mistake and entirely unnecessary. The whites had been driven almost beyond endurance by the many outrages committed by the Indians on the frontier, and were in a measure excusable for not exercising that common judgment which no doubt would have prevented the fight and its serious consequences.

In order to keep from taking part in the Civil War those Kickapoos still living in the Indian Territory decided to move to Mexico, and started thorough Texas with their families to the Rio Grande. They were followed from the Clear Fork of the Brazos River by Confederate Soldiers who were reinforced by detachments of home guards from Brown and other counties.

During the Civil War the remote frontier counties were exempt from service in the Confederate army in order that the men might remain at home to protect the frontier against Indians. Brown County was one of this class of counties and in line with the others, organized a company with D. H. Moseley as captain and Adison Martin as lieutenant. When reinforcements were asked for on this occasion Brown County was drawn on for fourteen men and the fol-

lowing named persons were sent under command of Lieutenant Martin: B. W. Lee, G. H. Adams, A. E. Adams, John P. Brown, James G. Connell, R. M. Hanna, Sam Hanna, Isaac Bradshaw, P. R. Clark, T. D. Haines, W. B. Chandler, E. D. Carmack, J. Ballinger, and Henry Jones.

On January 7th, in the year 1865, it was reported to Captain Taton, who was in command of the combined forces, that the Indians were in camp on Dove Creek, in a dense thicket, and he decided that night that the attack should take place the following morning. B. W. Lee and James Mulkey, who were Lieutenants in Captain Fossett's Company at Camp Colorado, both of whom had considerable knowledge of Indians' habits, reconnoitered the Indian Camp on their own account the night before the fight, and on their return reported to the officers that unmistakable indications pointed to a camp of friendly Indians and advised investigation. To this there was no attention paid. The attack was made next morning in a pell-mell but desperate charge which was repeated time and again, with heavy loss, but they could not dislodge the Indians from the thicket. The fight continued the greater part of the day. Late in the evening the whites were forced to withdraw with the loss of about twenty men killed and several others wounded, some of whom died on the way home. The Indian loss was fourteen killed. The wounded were all carried off. When the fight commenced Martin was ordered by Captain Fossett to take his men and cap-



ture the Indians' horses, about 450 head. This was accomplished with a rush and with the horses an old Indian and two Indian boys, about 12 and 13 years of age, were taken. Soon after the capture was made one of the officers and some of the men rode up and gave orders that Indians must not be taken alive. The old Indian was immediately shot to death and the two boys would have shared the same fate had it not been that one of the men interfered with a positiveness that left no room for misunderstanding, and told the officer that he would not permit the murder of these boys. The little Indian boys understood the situation and they clung to this man until he saw a chance for them to escape. Under his direction they made a dash for liberty, and when last seen were entering the Indian lines. The whites camped that night about two miles from the battle ground, leaving their dead on the battle ground. A very heavy snow fell that night and it continued to snow all the next day, the weather was intensely cold, causing great suffering among the wounded. The second day the camp was moved a short distance and some of the men went back to bury the dead. The Indians left soon after the fight was over, leaving all their equipage. I don't know how many of our brave boys are resting under the sod near the Dove Creek battle ground. Comanche men went out and brought their dead to Comanche and buried them, two as good and as brave men as Comanche ever lost in any battle. They were Mr. Don Cox and Mr. Parker. Our company that was at Camp Colorado lost one

young man by the name of Wiley. He was the last man killed. The whites had left the battle ground and were pulling back for the place where they had camped the night before. When this young man Wiley, and two other boys that had lost their horses in the fight, and were on foot, sat down to rest a while at a distance of four or five hundred yards from the enemy, the Indians fired a volley at the whites as they left with their long range guns and a bullet passed through Mr. Wiley's head, killing him instantly.

There was a man living at Camp Colorado by the name of Joe Byers, a bachelor, who stayed the most of his time with Mart Childress. He had no hair on his head—had lost his hair from some cause when he was young, but he wore a wig that looked like a fine head of hair. He was killed in this fight and when they went back to bury the dead they found Joe Byers with his head cut off, laying eight or ten feet from his body. I suppose having no scalp for them they thought they would cut his head off.

The country suffered more from Indians after the war, until they were entirely driven out, than it did from 1846 up to the war. The cause of the red men doing so much more depredating and being more hostile was due to the fact that they had so many white men with them to encourage and plan for them. During the war a great many emigrants from the old states came to Texas from both north and south in order to keep out of the war and finding the frontier of Texas with so few men to protect it,

and so much stock, and so many families with no men folks large enough to protect them, those Jay-hawkers as they were called, could not stand the temptation, so they began to fall in with the Indians and furnish them arms and ammunition. These bad white men would come right into the settlements and spy out the best place to make their raid and then fall back to the Indian camp and instruct them just how to make the round and not be seen. So the Indians would get a bunch of horses and get out often without being discovered. Those white men would lay out until the Indians got the stolen horses far enough away for there to be no possible chance to be overtaken, and then take the horses on to Mexico and sell them and buy ammunition and supplies, and thus furnish the Indians with equipment for another raid.

Now this may seem like a supposition of the writer, about how this Jay-hawking was managed, but men who were on the frontier of this state in those days know it to be a fact. Before the war five men could face thirty Indians and put them to flight, they had nothing but bows and arrows to use in battle, but after the war they were as well armed as the whites. This is one evidence that the white thieves worked with them, but a more positive evidence is that on several occasions white men had been seen with them.

## THE QUANTRELL GANGS.

The Quantrell men, who made several raids into Texas about the close of the war, were parties who had left the old states and drifted onto the frontier. They were in most cases deserters from the army and were led by a man by the name of Quantrell. In Arkansas they made up a considerable company, picking up all the hard customers they met who wanted to get over into Mexico. When they reached the Texas line they divided up into squads, ten or fifteen in a bunch, going through the Western part of the state. They knew that the men were about all away with the army and that they could pick up all the good horses they could find on the way, and get through to the border without being disturbed in the transaction. They would have a good stake when they landed in Mexico and sold the horses they had gathered up, as they never took anything but the very best animals.

One small bunch of these men came through Comanche County and passed Mr. Watson's place about ten miles west of the town. They took the best horses he had and went from there over into San Saba County, and were traveling up the San Saba River when they saw a small bunch of good horses grazing out in the valley, about three hundred yards from a house. They made a round-up and began to rope them in. The owner, who was sick in bed, sent his little boy out to see what they meant. The little boy told them that they were his father's horses and to let them alone; they asked him his father's name

and he told them it was Ketchup. They replied with an oath that he would never ketch-up with his horses, and just led them off.

Some time after that another squad of these Quantrell men, some eighteen in number, passed through the country, following much the same trail. They had about gotten through the settlements when they were seen by a man in the upper edge of Burnet County. He sent a runner to Camp San Saba, and Capt. Cook sent a scout out who struck the trail of the gang in the upper edge of Llano County, and followed it on to old Fort McKavett, where they caught up with them. It was just at sundown and they had made camp. They all sprang to their feet and ordered the scout to halt, which they did at a distance of about eighty yards. The eighteen men faced thirty of the soldiers and asked them what they wanted. The officer answered: "We are a scout of soldiers and have been on your trail three days; we want to investigate your business in this country;" at the same time ordering them to stack their arms. The leader of the gang stepped in front of his men and said: "If you are Confederate authority, we will surrender, but if your are militia we will die at the breech of our guns." So our lieutenant made out that he was a Confederate officer, and that if they could satisfy Capt. Cook that they were alright, they would be turned loose. They then surrendered as prisoners and were brought back to Camp San Saba and kept under guard for eight days. They soon discovered after getting into camp that they would be sent to Austin and turned over to the au-

thorities, but on the night before they were to start, having gotten chummy with some of the boys who were detailed to act as guard, they escaped with their help and reached the Mexican border, having had several hours the start of the soldiers who were in pursuit. This was the last time these Quantrell men were ever heard of in Texas and it was the last that was ever heard of the two soldiers who went with them.

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### SOME TROUBLES IN EARLY DAYS.

Soon after the settling of Old Cora, in Comanche County, the news reached there that a Ranger Company was being organized in Palo Pinto County, and four of our boys, John Triddle, Thos. Jeffers, Andrew Steward and another whose name I have forgotten, decided they would go up and join that Company. About the time they were ready to start two men came to Old Cora from Williamson County, one named Anderson Kisor and another by the name of Talley, who said they were on their way up to Palo Pinto to have a man arrested and take him back to Williamson County for some crime he had committed down there. The boys told these men of their intention of going up to join the Ranger Company, and they suggested that as the country was practically unsettled and there was constant danger from the Indians, that they all go together.



The following day they got together at Comanche and started for Palo Pinto. When they got to within three or four miles of the town they passed a house where Kisor and Talley said they thought the man they wanted lived, and they suggested it would be better to stop and get dinner as there was good water and grass, as nearer to town the grass would not be so good for their horses. The place where they stopped was about two hundred yards from the house they had just passed and the two men said that they would walk up there and ascertain if the party they wanted lived there, or if not, where he did live. So the boys made camp and had begun preparations for dinner when they heard three gun shots in the direction of the house and looking up saw Kisor and Talley coming towards them in a run. This excited the boys in camp and they asked the two men when they reached them what was the trouble; they replied that they had killed that old scoundrel up at the house and that they had better get away from there without delay. The boys replied that they had not killed anyone and had no reason to run off, as if they did, they would be implicated in the murder. So Kisor and Talley left the boys to hold the sack and no one has ever heard of either of these two men since.

The four boys went on towards town, intending to report the circumstance, but a runner had already been there and gotten the sheriff and a posse together, these met the boys as soon as they arrived and arrested them and took their arms from them. The boys told their story, where they were from and

all they knew of the two men who had joined them, giving the facts of the whole matter, but they were young and had never before been in any such trouble, and having no friends in the country they failed to satisfy the sheriff, and he took them and put them all in jail.

The boys then wrote their friends in Comanche County of their trouble and the sheriff mailed the letter for them to Comanche. When the letter arrived, Mr. Mercer, J. T. Neighbors, Hiram Barbee, and my father, J. M. Cross, went up to help the boys out of their trouble. On reaching Palo Pinto they found that the sheriff and some of the other County Officials were Free Masons, and they soon became fraternally known; Barbee, Mercer and my father being Masons. This fraternal influence was a great help in getting the boys an immediate trial before the Justice of the Peace, when they were at once acquitted and returned home with their friends.

A younger brother of the writer's, G. B. Cross, now residing in Brownwood, has since told me that what my father said upon his return, of the influence that Masonry had in getting these boys out of jail, made a great impression on him even though he was but a very small boy at the time.

## INDIAN DEPREDACTIONS IN BELL COUNTY IN THE SPRING OF 1857.

A new settlement was being formed in the northwest part of Bell County near Sugar Loaf mountain, by homesteaders and newcomers who were not familiar with Indian warfare. During the light moon of April, 1859, the Indians raided this settlement and killed a man by the name of Pierce, and a Mr. Riggs and his wife, and captured a boy of Riggs' and two little girls, but these escaped.

Mr. Pierce, Mr. Riggs, Mr. Elms and a few others lived in that settlement near Sugar Loaf Mountain. Mr. Pierce and Mr. Riggs were engaged in hauling cedar from a nearby cedar brake. Mr. Riggs lived nearest the cedar brake and it was his custom to wait the coming of Pierce each day when they would proceed to the brake with their wagons. On this sad April morning Mr. Pierce, accompanied by a small boy by the name of Dave Elms,—Mr. Riggs not being ready to start,—drove down toward the cedar brake which he had scarcely reached when the Indians sprang from ambush, surrounded his wagon and killed him. While they were killing Pierce the boy attempted escape by running, but the Indians pursued and captured him. When the Indians ran onto Pierce, Mr. Riggs had started with his wagon, but on witnessing the attack he abandoned his team, ran home and taking his wife and three children, started to his brother's place which was within sight of his own home. All this was in full view of

the Indians and when they had murdered Pierce, and captured the boy, they turned their attention to the fleeing family. Leaving one of the bucks to guard the boy Dave, they overtook the Riggs family, killed and scalped Mr. and Mrs. Riggs and carried off the two little girls, leaving the baby boy unhurt. After having committed this atrocious deed the Indians returned to Mr. Riggs home and took such articles as suited their fancy and that they could carry off. When the savages caught the boy, Dave Elms, they stripped him bare, and because he resisted they whipped him unmercifully with a whip made of a cow's tail. The Indian who was left to guard him became deeply interested in the tragedy just then being enacted and when his whole attention was fixed on the slaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Riggs the boy made his escape. After his escape the first man he met was Mr. Ambrose Lee, he lived in the little settlement and lives today on the same place, a venerable old pioneer and respected citizen. Mr. Lee seized his gun and hastened to where Mr. and Mrs. Riggs had been killed and where he found their mutilated bodies and the little babe crawling around in the blood of its parents. Mr. Lee was the first man to reach the scene of the tragedy; A. M. Woods was the second. After plundering the Riggs' home, the Indians went south about ten miles taking all the stock that came in reach, then turning west they came in sight of a man on horseback. Four of their number gave chase, killed and scalped him taking his horse and all his effects. The Indians

driving the herd of stolen horses passed along near the body of this unfortunate man while he was yet alive and the little girls who had witnessed the chase and killing, heard his groans as they passed the dying victim of savage ferocity. This man's name was Peevy.

The Indians had out spies on each side of their course and after traveling some distance, their spy on the north side reported a body of horsemen approaching. They immediately changed their course and took down a rough hollow, in order to keep out of sight of the horsemen discovered by their spy. Each of the Riggs girls were mounted behind an Indian. The savages were going on a run, and the smallest girl fell off. The elder girl saw her fall and seeing the Indian made no effort to get her, she jumped off. The Indian she was riding with grabbed for her and caught her by the clothing, and held to her for some distance her head and arms almost touching the ground, finally she grabbed a bush and held with such strength that her skirt tore off and was left in the hands of the savage while she was left bruised and bleeding on the ground, the Indians having no time to look after their captives. This brave girl made her way back to where her little sister had fallen. It was now late in the evening and the air was chilly. The little child had sustained bruises in her fall on the rocks but with her sister's aid was able to travel. They began the toilsome journey in the direction they had come. After nightfall they came to a vacant cabin, abandoned by some pioneer,

in which they passed the night. The little child complained of cold and hunger, and, although there was no food to be had, the older sister, herself but a child, showed the qualities of a Texas heroine. She removed every vestage of her clothing and wrapped the shivering form of her little sister forgetful of her own comfort, thinking only of the sister's comfort.

Next morning the little girls followed a path which led them to another vacant house where they found that the occupants had just left, frightened away, probably by the Indians, leaving all their household goods. With lacerated and swollen feet the children could go no further. Some time during the day a man came to the house who had not heard of the Indians being in the country. He placed the two girls on his horse, walked and led the animal and took them to Capt. Dameron's, where they found quite a number fortified up. Here were a few men for protection. The others had gone in pursuit of the Indians. Here at Capt. Dameron's the girls were cared for until they were delivered to their relatives. Dave Elms has been known ever since that fatal day as Indian Dave Elms. I do not know where the girls live at the present time.

At the time of this tragedy I lived in Comanche county, but after the civil war I moved to Bell county, where I met Dave Elms and he gave me this account of the circumstances.



## FIVE BOYS FROM LAMPASAS COUNTY WRONGFULLY ARRESTED

In the summer of 1857, a party of five boys left Lampasas and made a trip out west to look at the country, hunt buffalo and other wild game. They went up the Brazos river and were gone about three weeks. After they had started on their return trip they had a scrap with a party of Indians on the Brazos river and one Indian was killed. Proceeding on their homeward journey they passed through Erath, Comanche and Cory-elle counties. Some four or five days before they reached home a small party of Indians, led by a red headed white man, surprised a white family in the upper edge of Erath County, which was then the extreme frontier. The Indians killed the man and held the woman until the red headed man had searched all their possessions, having found some money in their trunk. The family had one girl about twelve years old, whom they took prisoner and carried off about ten miles before turning her loose, so that she could not give any alarm until they could get a good start. She went back to the nearest settler's house and told what had happened, and the next morning a few men got together and took the trail, which led in a westerly direction. After going some ten or twelve miles they lost the trail and just about where the five white boys, returning from their western trip, crossed the trail made by the Indians. When the white men who were in pursuit of the Indians came to the trail where the Lampasas boys had crossed they

were mislead and followed the trail of the boys which turned east towards the settlements.

The men felt certain that they were after the right party that that all of them were white men. While following this trail the men came across some arrows and trinkets that had recently been dropped and this circumstance convinced them they were on the trail of the parties responsible for the killing. When the men got near Stephenville they met a man who told them he had seen and talked with the boys they were following, the day before, and they told him about their trip and about the killing of the Indians up on the Brazos, they also told him that they lived in the town of Lampasas, and gave their names; two by the name of Jones and the three others were Willis. I am well acquainted with all the boys.

At Stephenville a few more men joined the pursuing party and followed the trail through Comanche county. On reaching Cora, in the lower part of that County, they were joined by Frank Collier and several others. From here a man was sent to Gatesville for more men, and the excitement was running very high.

Before reaching Lampasas they found a sheet of paper with a number of names on it, among which were the names of the boys they were following. This gave still more evidence as to the boys' guilt, causing men to think they were part of an organized band of robbers, as there had been other raids of a similar nature, on the frontier. When they reached Lampasas they arrested the

five young men. Some of the men went to the officers of the town and showed them the arrows they had found on the trail also the list of names on the paper. When the Sheriff said, "this handwriting is that of R. Y. Cross," so they sent for him. This man Cross was a brother of the writer and was running a wood shop in that town. When Cross saw the names he said it was a list of the men who belonged to the debating society of the town. He called their attention to the names of two prominent young lawyers, the only ones of the town. This began to speak better for the prisoners. When ready to start, the pioneers were told that there would be a girl who said she would know the red headed man who did the killing and robbing. Then one of the Jones boys said if that was the way the thing was to be investigated and he the only red headed boy in the party, he would take his camp clothes he wore on the trip and wear them at the trial. This still spoke well for the boys, showing they wanted a fair investigation.

When they got to old Cora with the prisoners they were joined by a party of men from Gatesville, numbering thirty or more. I never saw anything create more excitement than did this circumstance. When they neared Stephenville word had reached town ahead of the scout. The women of the town got together and went to the hotel which was a row of cabins thirty feet long, and asked the landlord if they could stand on the gallery and see the prisoners when they got there. He said "yes, and I will have them stop and let

you get a good look at them.” When the party reached there the men were arranged in double file placing the prisoner Jones in front on the right and a guard on the left. Behind as rear guards, were two men and so on down making three guards to the prisoner. They were halted in front of the hotel so the ladies could see the prisoners. One old lady stepped up to Jones the front prisoner, who was the best dressed man and riding the best horse in the crowd, and whom the old lady took to be the Captain of the scouts, and said: “Mr. please show me those thieves and robbers you have.” All right,” said Jones, turning in his saddle and pointing to his rear guard, said: “Madam we think him to be the worst one of the gang.” That guard was Uncle Dan Hammock of Gatesville, and as good a man as lived in Coryelle County. Being a jolly old man Uncle Dan enjoyed the joke as much as anyone.

He was accustomed to wearing a long beard reaching to the waist of his trousers. The old lady put on her glasses and looked him in the face and said, “Women, don’t he look mean? Oh, you old rascal, that long beard is a dead give away.” Uncle Dan walled his eyes at the woman and looked as vicious as possible. The old woman said: “Mr. take him away or he will kill somebody here.” So Jones yelled out, “Forward” and they marched away. When they reached the place where the killing and robbing took place, they formed the prisoners in line and brought the girl out to see if they had the man who robbed the trunk. She inspect-

ed the men very closely, walked around the red-headed man several times, and said the thief was not there. The company was formed in two lines and after inspecting them all she said he was not there; she also told them there was only one white man in the crowd that killed her father, that the other men were Indians.

Such evidence as this kept the young men from being hanged, yet some of them still had their doubts as to their innocence and wanted to punish them. Unwilling they went to the prisoners and told them they would have to turn them loose; but the prisoners said, "no you don't have to do anything of the kind—you have had us four days, now you will go with us awhile. If we go home with any suspicion resting on us it will always be said that if that little twelve year old girl had not been excited our necks would have been broken right here." When asked what they wanted, they replied that they wanted the whole Company to take the trail of the ones who did the robbing and follow it for awhile. So some of the men who were on the trail before were put in the lead and in a short time they come to where the turn was made to the east, here the Lampasas boys stopped and showed them that was their trail. After circling around for a while they found the Indians had still continued in a westerly direction.

The boys were then given their arms, and made no complaint whatever about the trouble they had been put to, as there were often bad characters in the country that had to be looked after.

## THE STORY OF THE KILLING OF CARMEAN AND TANKERSLY IN 1863.

James Carmean and James Tankersly were both residents of Comanche County. In the fall of 1863, they took a large supply of bacon to sell at Camp Collier, on Clear Creek, to our Company stationed at that place, some four or five miles from the site of the present town of Brookesmith. The men stayed two nights at the soldiers' camp and on the second morning started on the return trip to their homes. When they had gone about six miles they were attacked by a band of sixteen or eighteen Indians. The men turned back and tried to make a run for our camp. Tankersly was a large man and was riding a lame horse. Carmean could undoubtedly have made his escape but he was too brave a man to leave his friend, so he held back and they fought the Indians for about a mile. They were coming right back on the road to the Camp; close to the roadside was a large oak tree, by this they stopped, Tankersly being wounded in both legs. Carmean got behind this tree with his rifle and stood the Indians off while his companion crawled off his horse and dragged himself into a small thicket nearby. It was evident that Tankersly died first, having received fatal wounds while on his horse. There was no one to tell this, but blood on the ground from where he got off to where he had crawled to die, showed how badly he was wounded. Signs on the battle ground showed that men never fought more bravely for their



lives than these two. One of the Indians had a rifle and we found where he had crawled up behind a stump and shot at Carmean, who was still behind the oak tree. We found a bullet in this stump that Carmean had evidently put there. The Indian succeeded in putting a bullet through the thicket, and struck Carmean in the breast, killing him. Tankersly's body was pierced many times with spears, both men were scalped and Carmean's clothing was taken. Tankersly's clothing was badly torn and too bloody to carry off.

We found the bodies of the men but a short time after they were killed, for two of our boys, Pat Gallegar and Isom Large had been out horse hunting and come on them while their wounds were still breeding. The Indians were still around and immediately gave chase, being mounted on good horses however, the boys soon ran off from them.

We took the bodies of Tankersly and Carmean to camp and buried them in the same grave. The two men were neighbors, they died side by side and are sleeping side by side at the old Camp Collier, near Brookesmith. I knew the men well, they were two of my good friends.

I cannot tell what became of Carmean's wife. Tankersly had two sons—Don Tankersly is now living at Killeen, Bell County, and his younger brother, Lee Tankersly, lives at Gatesville, Coryelle County.

## IKE WILLIAMS KILLED THE INDIAN.

In the year of 1852, a small party of Indians were discovered on Nolan Creek some ten or twelve miles above Belton. They were followed by five men from Belton. The names of those men were: Ike Williams, Joe Townson, John Potter, Bob White and Dave Williams. The men after two or three days travel come up with the Indians finding them camped in a canyon right on the branch. It was a rough hollow with mountain brakes on either side. When the Indians saw the white men were ahead of them, turned back down the hollow; the three men after them. The other two men who were on the other side of the hollow heard them running back down the ravine, and striking spurs to their horses headed the Indians right at the camp they had just left; there the fight came off. The white men killed one of the Indians and the others got away.

At the time of this fight I was out west at a military post. I got the account of this fight from West Danley, who is now living in the town of Belton and is the oldest citizen in that town. It has been said that Dave Williams killed the Indian but Danley says that Ike Williams killed him with a rifle ball, the other four men had double barrell shot-guns.

## THE INDIANS EAT RAW MEAT.

In the year 1868, John McQuire who lived a short distance from the town of Comanche, sent two of his little boys out early one morning to hunt a yoke of steers. The names of these two boys were Billy and Jesse. After walkinig a mile or so from home, they heard a noise ahead of them and looking up they saw a bunch of cattle coming towards them over a bridge. Thinking that Indians might be after them, the boys, small though they were, were equal to the emergency and hid in a thicket nearby to watch the cattle come. Sure enough, the Indians were after the cattle and when they reached a spot close to where the boys were hid, they roped a young calf. The boys said the old cow put up a fight, but they cut her ham strings and she did not bother any more. Within fifty yards of the boys the Indians killed the calf and ate part of it raw. The horses were grazing around and one of them was within thirty feet of the thicket where the boys were when the Indian got on to ride away.

I mention this circumstance to show the danger the pioneer families were constantly in, in those days. Billie McQuire is at this time living eight miles north of Blanket. He is one of the parties I can refer the reader to, as he can vouch for the correctness of the history of Comanche county.

## The WATER-SPOUT ON NOLAN CREEK.

In the fall of 1849 there was a water-spout on Nolan Creek above Belton, which put the water all over the valley where the town now stands. Several small houses were washed away. Below the town where the stage horses were kept. Capt. Jack Wright, familiarly known as "Daddy Wright," now a citizen of Comanche was at that time a boy of fifteen and was employed to drive the stage from Waco to Austin. On the night of the flood, Jack was sleeping in the loft of the stable, and knew nothing of the high water until he was awakened by the horses hitting the loft with their heads. He got down and cut them loose and another span that were tied to a log in another stall. When the horses were free Jack climbed on top of the stable and stayed until it was washed down and lodged against a tree. He climbed this tree, but soon it was struck by a drift and went under. He climbed into another tree but it was not long before it too gave way. He swam down the creek some distance and caught a large tree, climbed it and stayed there until daylight. From this tree he discovered one of the horses he had cut loose standing at the end of a little house. He swam out to the horse and mounted him, intending to ride him to the shore, when he tried to start he found the horse was fastened by the foot. Jack got down in the water and found that the horse was fastened to the house by a bridle, he put the bridle on the horse and rode to the shore on the north side of the

creek. Being cut off from the town and his home, and wearing only his night clothes he was badly chilled, he went a short distance to the house of "Uncle" Neal Dennis where he obtained some clothing. When the water ran down he returned to town, where he found a party of men searching the drifts for his body, so certain were they that he had been drowned. This was not the only close place Jack Wright was in during the settling of Bell and Comanche Counties. He was in many Indian fights, was shot in the leg on one occasion by an Indian. Capt. Wright now resides in Comanche where he is loved by all who know him.









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A SUPPLEMENT OR  
ADDITION TO  
EARLY DAYS  
in Central Texas

BY  
F. M. CROSS

Containing additional Incidents of my Early  
Experiences and an Outline of my Views  
on Various Religious Subjects.

Published April 1914.







F. M. CROSS

Blanket, Texas.

# SOME FURTHER EXPERIENCES DURING THE EARLY DAYS IN CENTRAL TEXAS.

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## PART I.

In the winter of 1852 I was on the Valley Creek Ranch near Fort Chadbourn working for McCoy and Gooch; as before stated in the earlier editions of the book, at which time the Government decided to send a company of soldiers up into the Wichita Mountains to bring the northern Comanche Indians and all the wild tribes into a treaty, and, if they would not surrender, they would just kill them out.

Capt. Calhoun was in command of the United States troops at Ft. Chadbourn, and took two companies of United States soldiers from Ft. Chadbourn, and three companies of Texas Rangers ordered out to go on the expedition. These companies were led as follows: One by Capt. Bougers; one by Capt. Fitzhugh; and one by Capt. Rogers. I will say just here that Major Rankin, of Brownwood, Texas, was a Lieutenant in Capt. Bougers' company. I was sent by McCoy and Gooch with a bunch of beef cattle to butcher for the soldiers.

The two companies from Fort Chadbourn went down the overland route, five miles below Phantom Hill. I went with this party. I had two men to help me drive the cattle and we lay over several days waiting for the Rangers to get there, when the

companies all got together, we pulled out for the Wichita Mountains, and traveled on the divide between the Clear Fork and the Salt Fork of the Brazos River. I do not remember just how many wagons we had, loaded with feed stuff, provisions, bedding, tools, tents and ammunition, but there were enough to make a plain road. We had a Delaware Indian as guide, whose name was Red Buck. He and his little squad would lead off in single file, then the five companies in double file after him, and then the wagons and two pieces of artillery following the wagons. So I and my boys had a good road to drive our cattle in. We traveled west some degrees north until we came to the Salt Fork of the Brazos River about what is called the Double Mountain. We were about fifteen days, as well as I can remember, on this divide from the Bellnap and Phantom Hill road to where we came to the Brazos River. One thing I do remember is that it was the coldest part of our trip. There were Government mules that froze to death while going up that divide. (I wish to say right here, if the reader has any doubt as to any statement made here about this trip, you can write Major Rankin, at Brownwood, Texas, who was one of the party.) How it was that some of our men did not freeze is a mystery to me. The command always left camp at daylight and stopped at one o'clock, and remained in camp until daylight the next morning. Capt. Calhoun was a United States officer, and the commanding officer of this expedition. The United States soldiers were better prepared for cold weather than the Texas Rangers, the United States troops had



large round tents to sleep in, also heavy overcoats and overalls to ride in which kept them comfortable, while the Texas Rangers had open end tents and very thin clothing for such a hard winter, also their clothing was not as heavy as the yankee blue was, but they were true boys and went through without a murmur. The two boys with me, and myself, had a better time during those cold days than soldiers, as they had to sit in the saddle from one camp to the next, while we could get down and turn our horses loose with the cattle and walk until our feet got warm. From the Brazos River, we turned due north, and headed for Wichita. When we got within about five miles of the Wichita River, we came to a bluff, from which it was some two hundred yards down to the level of the valley below. It was not that many yards perpendicularly, though we had to dig down the mountain that far in order to get down into the valley. One hundred men were put to work with grubbing hoes, pick and spades to make a road down that mountain. It took a half day to get the road made and the train down the mountain, which put us into the Wichita Valley. Here, on this river, we stayed about one month, and sent out scouts in all directions but failed to find an Indian on the trip. I do not remember how many days we were out. I think we started the latter part of November, 1852, and got back to Ft. Chadbourn about the 10th of the following January.

This valley on the Wichita River is pretty level, though it has a great many little round mounds in it about the size and about as high as a house. I

and my boys with our cattle did not have to camp in line with the soldiers, so went to the tool wagon and got some hoes and shovels, and on the south side of one of those little mounds, we dug out a place long enough to stretch our little tent, putting the open end of the tent facing the wall, leaving room to walk around one side with wood, and had a fire place cut out in the bank, the bank being north of us. I never saw a more comfortable place in my life to sleep in during cold weather.

When we got ready to start back to Ft. Chadbourn a lot of men were sent to dig and work the road two days before we could get up the mountain and our wagons were almost empty. When we came down that mountain, we had both hind wheels of the wagons locked, and a big rope fastened to the hind axle and about fifty men holding to that rope. That is the way we let the wagons down the mountain. We went back pretty much along the same trail we made in going out.

In the previous editions of this book I have already given the chief incidents of my life from a 12 year old boy up to 1861, the first year of the Civil War. I joined as a State Ranger, James Norris of Waco being Colonel of that regiment. We were mustered in for one year as State soldiers, and were stationed on Pecan Bayou in Coleman County, where the little burg of Burkett now is, spending the summer there. When winter came on we moved in to Camp Colorado post, which place had been vacated by the soldiers. When the year for which we enlisted expired, Colonel Norris and some of the men went home. Just at that time Colonel Mc-

Cord, of San Marcos, came up to Colorado Post. He was a Confederate officer, and all the men that wanted to go in as Confederate soldiers he enlisted in his regiment, and knowing that it was intended for frontier protection, I joined the regiment. My captain was J. J. Callin, who is still living. I met him two years ago in Menard; I also had the pleasure of meeting Colonel McCord in Coleman City. Those two were among the great many men I learned to love during the war between the States.

While working with my book I met with a great many old time friends, and the descendants of men whose fathers I had scouted with. It is a great pleasure to me to even meet with the young and middle aged sons of those old pioneer fellows, and talk with them. While I was over in San Saba, I got acquainted with a Mr. Murry who is a banker in that town. I knew his father, who was one of the first business men there. Also I met with Joe Chandler, who was a soldier with me in the war days. I enjoy meeting those old fellows, and talking with them.

A short while before the war closed, Colonel McCord got orders to go to Kirby Smith, across the river, and having a surplus of men in his regiment he had O'Bryant's company to come from Camp San Saba up to Colorado Post. There the surplus of J. J. Collin's and O'Bryant's companies were put together and formed a Battalion for frontier protection. The officers elected for this Battalion were Captain Fosett, whose company stayed at Colorado Post, and Captain Cook, who was elect-

ed for the other company. This is what separated me from my old friends in McCord's regiment. I was elected second lieutenant in Captain Cook's company, and we were sent to Camp San Saba, and at that place, I was appointed Quarter Master for our battalion, which office I held until the close of the war. This gave me an opportunity to do down into the settlements occasionally to get supplies for the companies. I had to go to Bell, Williamson, Burnett, and Coryell counties for these supplies, and it kept me pretty busy all the time.

When Colonel McCord left Colorado Post he took J. J. Collin's and O'Bryant's companies and went down to Camp McKinney, seven miles below Austin, remaining at that place several weeks until all the regiment got together.

While they were there, I went down to get the pack mules and wagons with tools and such things as we could use at the front, and having time to spare, I went around to the Colonel's tent to talk with him a while. It was a very warm summer day and we were sitting out in front of the tent, when a young man of O'Bryant's company who had the name of being a good hand to buy, that is to get chickens, shoats, and such articles of food as soldiers loved to eat, a Burnett County boy, whose name was John Calvert, came by in about thirty steps of us and said to me, "This way a moment." I walked to him, and he asked me to take a little walk with him. About eighty yards west of the camps were a gulch and thicket some two hundred yards long and forty yards wide, and when we got around the thicket, I stopped him and said, "John

I don't want to go into that thicket. You know that the orders are that any Commissioned officer who sees the soldiers playing cards and does not report them, shall be court martialed." I was certain there were some boys in there playing cards; but he said, "No, come on, and we pushed on into the thicket, and when we reached the middle of it, he pointed to two big fat goats, and said, "Come around to my mess tonight and eat goat meat." That boy had gone a mile out on the prairie and roped those goats and keeping that thicket between him and the camp, had brought them in there and tied them.

When the regiment got together I took all the mules, wagons, and such things as they could not carry and with my men pulled back to Camp San Saba.

At the close of the war I was at Colorado Post. Having lost my wife during the war, I got a job of cow-punching with John Mullin on his ranch on the Jim Ned Creek near where Thrifty town is located. Uncle John is still living on the same place, and is loved by all who know him. The Mullin family are pioneer citizens of Texas, and are well known for their honesty and bravery. These families are all mentioned in the first book I wrote, but since my first writing, two of them have passed over the Jordan of Death, towit: William Mullin, of Lampasas County, and Jane Cross of Brown County. Uncle John is the only one left of the Mullin family. He and his good wife are still living, but are very feeble.

At this place I married my second wife, and went to Comanche County living there one winter.

The next spring, we moved down to Navarro County where we spent four years. This part of the State at that time was as good a farming country as I ever found in all Texas. I stayed first on a farm owned by the widow of Dr. Hill. They were one of the first families to settle in Navarro County. This old woman had a son by her first husband, whose name was Robert Slaughter. He was living with her and was a good citizen. This old woman and her brother owned all the land around Spring Hill at that time. Her brother's name was Mathews; he was a butcher, and was usually called Uncle Harve.

Those old pioneer people were all good citizens and I wish to give the names of some old friends whose acquaintance I made during the four years I lived in Navarro County. Spring Hill was nine miles from Dresden on the Corsicana and Waco road. When I came to Spring Hill there were two stores in the place. One belonged to Harvey Mathews and the other to Thad Sparks. Uncle Harvey Mathews had a mill and gin near the store. He sold his store to young Harvey and Calvin Mathews. The additions to the town while I stayed there were a dry goods store by Johnson Brothers and a drug store owned by Dr. Ferguson. The only men I knew in that country were George Savage and George Norris, who were with me in the war, but I had as many friends when I left there as any one in the country. Following is a list of thoes whom I met as neighbors around Spring Hill: The business men not already mentioned were: Dr. Deen and Dr. Mobley, John Belt, John Gleghorne and Mr. Hammons.



I will relate a little joke on this man Hammons. I lived right in the village, and one Sunday had a good crowd of the town folks to visit me. It being a warm evening, and we were all sitting out in the shade of the house. We got to talking about cyclones and storms, and this man, Hammons, told of a storm out in Arkansas which destroyed a town there. He said it tore up a printing office and that a man living fifty miles from this town picked up a paper and read it a few moments after it was printed. He vowed it was the truth. Old father Smith, who was my wife's father, was sitting in the crowd, a smile on his face as if he did not believe the paper story. Everybody wanted to laugh but held in rather than make light of Hammon's story right in his face. About this time Uncle Harvey Mathews, the wealthy old butcher, came walking up and, after speaking to the crowd, asked what was the topic of the evening and I said that storms and cyclones were being discussed, and that brother Hammon had just given us the newspaper story, and from a little smile I had seen on father Smith's face, I did not think he believed the paper story. Uncle Harvey said that that was nothing, that he saw a tornado pass through Cedar Hill, twenty miles from there, about eight years before, which tore up every house in town, and took a flock of sheep up a half mile high in the air; in fact, he said it hooked a well up out of the ground and lodged it in a tree a mile from town. I said, "Stay with your paper story brother Hammons." This gave all a chance to laugh and hurt nobody's feelings.

I will now return to the old settlers: South of this place was a church in which all denominations worshipped and among them a family by the name of Richey. On Battle Creek lived people by the name of Blake, Carlton, Thomas, George, Bill Henson, five families by the name of Onstall, and one Dr. Keys, who also had three sons living in that neighborhood, and a man by the name of Barry and Mr. Fuller. Two miles southeast of Spring Hill lived a Dr. Brit Dawson. I am told that this is where the railroad station is now located. The first year I lived at Spring Hill I freighted from that place to Milligan and Bryan stations, hauling cotton down and goods back to Spring Hill and Dresden, also to Corsicana. Afterwards I farmed for two years, renting land from Harvey Mathews the first year, and the following year from the widow Treadwell. Her farm was on the south side of Richland Creek, about half a mile from the town. I made good corn and cotton each year, but there was so much sickness during the summer season and goods were so high, also the doctor bills, that I only was able to barely make a living in that country. The best money I made while living there was during the fourth and last year of my stay. There was a company of men who secured a charter to build a toll bridge on Richland Creek. Thaw Sparks was one of that company and was the general manager. He contracted with a rock mason to build the abutments for the bridge for the sum of eleven hundred dollars. The mason was to quarry and haul the rock, lime and sand, and everything else was to be furnished. This rock mason was an old

man, but very stout, whose name was Slade. He had two horses and a hand, and he hired me at \$1.75 a day to help him quarry and haul the rock and build the abutments. The banks on each side of the creek had to be excavated, and this work was let out to the lowest bidder. My bid being the lowest, \$50.00, it was awarded to me. I secured two men at one dollar a day each, and gave Slade one dollar and seventy five cents per day to help me, just what he gave me while I was working for him on the rock job. We completed that excavation in two days and my expenses all told were \$7.50, leaving me a net profit of \$42.50 for my two days' work. The lime used in those abutments cost considerable money in those days, and as I had made good on my dirt contract, I made a bid on furnishing the lime for those two pillars, or abutments, at eighty dollars and, when the bids were opened, I had the contract. Mr. Sparks was a good friend of mine, and he came to me and said, "Cross, you cannot furnish the lime at that price, for it will cost you eighty dollars at Galveston," and advised me to withdraw my bid and let the next lowest bidder have it. I told him I would furnish that lime and would get it in three hundred yards of Brig's place, and that I would have it ready in five days. I was the only man in that country that had seen a lime kiln burned on top of the ground. I had learned to burn lime in Bell County when I was a boy, and I hired ten negro men, four of them with wagons, and six with chop axes, and Mr. Slade and myself. We put up the wood, hauled the rock and placed them on the wood in one day and fired the

kiln that night and in four days it was burned down, and I had plenty of good lime to build the abutments and had lime to sell to the neighbors. My expenses for that day's work were \$13.50. which left me net \$66.50.

I think there must be some of those old Spring Hill men living yet; if so, they will verify any statement I have made about that country.

From Spring Hill I moved to Bell County in the year of 1871, and engaged in the stock business. In this I made the greatest mistake of my life. I had joined the Methodist Church the year before the war closed and upto this date (1871) had endeavored to live a devoted Christian life. Just here I got to striving for the goods of this world, like many others did in those days, and I am afraid that some of them are holding closer to the world than they are to the God that created them. After a few years in this business I lost my second wife, and sold out my stock interests on a credit, losing in the deal, just about ten thousand dollars. In a short time I found that I was lost—gone to the wall—both financially and spiritually—and reader let me tell you right here that the spirit of consecration is the greatest blessing that ever comes to any sinner. On realizing my condition I began to renew my covenant with my God, and finally got back all right. I was just about forty years old, but from then up to the present I have lived a Christian life, and tried to set good examples for the rising generation. At that time I had some motherless children, and I united with my last companion, which union lasted for a period

of thirty years. I have three children living by my first wife, two by the second and five by the third, and all but one are religious. I have a clear conscience of having lived right before them.

After the war I traveled some through Williamson, Bell, Burnet and San Saba Counties, which had all been organized after I came to Texas, except Williamson. It was an organized county when we first landed in the State. Some of the early settlers of Burnett County were men I got acquainted with after the county was organized. On Gabriel Creek lived the families of Boyeses, Stricklins, Wilkins, Caringtons and some others whom I do not remember just now. This settlement goes by the name of Stricklins' neighborhood to this day. Right in this community Van Hook and Scruggs were killed by the Indians. There are a great many old time friends of mine still living in Burnett County.

I was out in Llano County about fifteen years ago and found Rev. Bent Roberts and some of his boys. He is a Presbyterian preacher, and a good old citizen. He and myself were school boys together in Bell County sixty-three years ago, and were also soldier mates during the war. He is now living in Menard. I stopped over with him a few days, a year ago. When I get this addition to my book I will expect and hope to meet with him again and with many more of my old time friends.

In 1897 I moved from Coryell County to Hides Post in Mills County, where my father was living, my mother having died. I moved there to stay with and take care of father while he lived; two years later he died also. I then moved to Elkins

in the lower part of Brown County, and carried on a little grocery store for three years. We had a good school and two churches. Elkins was a great place in those days. The Baptists and Methodists would meet and hold their summer revivals together, but in many communities it is not like it was then. The denominational spirit is running so high now days that when a man lets his church enmity get above his Christianity he should attend a good old prayer meeting and try to get religion.

When I left Elkins, sold out my grocery business to Rev. M. W. McGaugh, and he is still running the store at that place. From Elkins I moved to Comanche County, rented a farm from Dr. D. P. Pinkard near Mercer's Gap and farmed on this place and was in this neighborhood six years. This was then, and is yet, a good farming country, though while there I had some very back luck. During the second year I lived on the Pinkard place I lost my last wife; this was nine years ago. At the time of her death, two of our daughters were married, and having the other two girls and our baby boy, I kept house one year and made another crop when my other two girls married and my little boy and I were left alone. I lived with my youngest daughter and her husband four years. I was in debt five hundred and twenty-five dollars at this time. I rented some land each year but it was very dry and crops very short, still I paid what I could each year on my debts. I kept the boy in school during the winter and he helped me in crop time, and, when the boy was large enough, I let him go and work for himself. I had just made three small



crops and paid on my debts, and still lacked \$130.00 of having it all paid. The year I worked alone I planted cotton altogether. I made six bales of cotton, and sold that cotton and paid all my debts, and, being seventy-three years old, and owing nobody anything but love, as I could not pay that debt with cotton, I decided to quit the cotton business. Perry Pinkard was the son-in-law that I lived with until he moved to Pecos County. That being too far west for me, I then lived with my oldest daughter by my last wife, Mrs. Russell Boynton. Their place is near Blanket in Brown County, and I make my home with them now. I have ten children living. Nine of them have homes and I am more than welcome to make my home whenever it suits me to accept, but I have always lived on my own resources and as long as I am able I want to live that way. I have always lived an active life, and, if I should sit around and do nothing in my old days, I would not live long. I am seventy-nine years two months and twelve days old at this writing, this ninth day of January, 1914.

I have given you in the first and last edition of this book a history of my life and it is not only possible but very true that I have missed some of the things that transpired in my earlier days. I do not believe there is a man living today—that if every act of his life was painted on canvas and held up before him—he would like the picture of himself. I would be willing to have, if it were possible, the last thirty-five years of my life analyzed which will be done in the near future. I am glad that the words of Eternal Truth teaches

us that if a man will turn from his sins and do that which is right and lawful that he shall save his soul alive and that his sins will be blotted out and shall not be remembered against him any more forever.

I think that the author of a book should give his readers a true statement of his honest convictions as to Christian religion, and, while I am a Methodist, yet I believe all honest and true believers of all denominations that believe in Salvation through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ are saved by grace of God, if they keep and do His commandments I think that the man who is always preaching his church emnity to his congregation is making more infidels than any other one thing that can be done and he will have to account for it at the Judgment. I believe in a united Christian religion, and that only.

## PART II.

Now reader the first edition of this book was a history of the early days. How the old pioneers had to farm and work for a living and scrap with the Indians, and so on. This last addition, so far, contains a partial history of my life; the rest of this book will be devoted to general instruction on our Christian religion.

While I am not much of a political man, I try to vote a judicious vote. The talented men of our country have gotten politics so mixed up that a common farmer hardly knows how he is voting, when he puts his ticket in the box. My greatest desire is to advise the rising generation how to live and manage to reach eternal life. While I was illiterately raised in the early days in Texas when there was no opportunity for gaining an education, I am glad that we are taught in the Bible that the plan of salvation is so plain that the wayfaring man does not err therein.

The first lesson that I want to discuss is found in St. John, 13th chapter and 15th verse: "For I have given you an example that ye shall do as I have done to you." Now you all understand that if a man wants to make a good mechanic he wants a good workman to learn him that trade, or if he wants to be a good scholar he wants the very best teacher to instruct him in that line, so, if we want to live a righteous life and get home to Glory, we should want the best instructor that we can get to show us the way, and we can not get a better one than Jesus Christ, the sinners' friend,

who spoke the words of this text, while He was on earth. Just here some people make a great mistake, they think because He had just washed His disciples' feet that that was all He had reference to when He said, "I have given you an example," but this was only one example. That act was to teach His disciples that they should keep their number clean, and here is the proof of that statement: When Peter refused to let Him wash his feet, the Master told him if he did not wash his feet He would not have any part with him. Then Peter said, "My hands and my feet also." But the Master said, "He that is clean need not to be washed, save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit and ye are clean but not all." So we see that Judas was not a clean man, for the Master said He knew who was to betray Him. If this act of our Savior teaches us anything more than an humble act of kindness, it is to keep our church clean. If we find a Judas in the church we should go to him in the spirit of love and try to get him to turn away from sin, and live a Christian and, if he will not repent, then turn him out of the church.

When Jesus Christ said, "I have given you an example," He had reference to everything He did while on this earth, that is the things that man can do today. We can't raise the dead or heal the sick. Things done as God or as mediator between God and man, the things He calls examples for us are the things that He did as man in the flesh. Now let us see what He did as a man: First, we should follow Him in His devotional habits. We

see Him after having spent the day in preaching and teaching in the dusty plains of Judea. He would retire at night and pray to God the Father. I am a strong advocate of family prayer; every good Christian man should erect a family altar, read a chapter of Scripture and pray in his family. In this we will thank God for the blessings of the day and ask God to prepare us for the duties of the next day. Also we are taught that He went about doing good, always trying to lead men into a better life. When He was resting at the well when the woman came to get water He did not fail to prove to her that He was the Christ, the Son of the Living God. This He did by giving her a history of her past life, and He not only saved the soul of the woman herself but many others, who believed on Him from what He had told her.

We should always speak a good word to our unsaved friends when and where we meet them; men don't know where their influence may reach. I want to give the reader an incident that occurred in my settlement a few years ago. It is something I witnessed myself. There was a young man teaching a singing school there. He had brought another young man with him. This young man was better advanced than most of the scholars and the teacher had him to assist him some in the school. Both he and the professor boarded at the same house, and one evening this young man and a few others were out on the gallery singing. Among the songs they sang was one worded thus: I will work, I will pray, I will labor every day in the Vineyard of the Lord. After they had sung

the song the lady where they boarded asked the young man if he would do what he said in the song he would do. She also spoke a few words to him as to what he ought to do. Some four or five years later this young man professed religion and some time after he was at a protracted meeting and while there had up a good revival. He walked up to the lady who had advised him five years before and told her that she was the cause of his being a Christian, through what she said to him during that singing school. That young man is now an ordained preacher in the Baptist Church. This woman is trying to follow the Savior in the example of doing good every day. Now reader I will not take up any more space in telling you what you should do, but will tell you some things that church members ought not to do. We should never attend any gathering or entertainment where we could not invite our Blessed Savior to go in with us. Still there are many a good family that make this mistake. Did you ever read in the Good Book of Jesus Christ going into any place where cursing, gambling and whiskey drinking or all sorts of sinful things were being practiced? Christ never was there except one time and there He upset the tables of the money-changers and drove them out and said, "You have made my Father's house a den of thieves." No, He never did attend a county or state fair, that we have any account of. Though we do hear Him say that we should abstain from the very appearance of evil. Now, dear reader, I leave this subject with you for your consideration. I could write a great deal



more on the examples of our Christ though I want to give you some more thoughts on other Scriptures. That God may bless and save all who may read this book is the earnest prayer of your humble friend.

“Wherefore seeing we are also compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.” Hebrews 12:1. We find that Paul speaks of being in war, fighting for the cause of our Christ. At the last part of his life, he said, “I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith.” But there he uses the word race. Now reader Paul has told us in the text how to prepare for this race. We must lay aside every weight. Now I remember a man who lived in Gatesville some twenty years ago; he was said to be the fastest runner in the state and there was a man from some other part of the State who came to Gatesville. The Gatesville man was a young lawyer. When they got the judges arranged and the two men came on the race track the young lawyer was dressed for the race. The man who told me of the incident said that every vestige of his suit would not have weighed more than three pounds, while the other man had on much heavier clothes. So the young lawyer won the race; the prize was a large sum of money. He got that money by being prepared for the race. Now reader, we are in a race not for money but for a home in the City of our God, and as the apostle says we must lay aside every weight, so we must watch ourselves very

close if we are carrying any weight that would hold us back in this race. What are the weights we sometimes are carrying and still claim to be in this Christian race? Well here is one; Sabbath breaking is a great weight for a man to try to carry and run this Christian race who though we see some of our church members heavily loaded with this dead weight. Some men get so busy in their farm work that they plow until sun down on Saturday night and if they want to make some changes in their work the coming Monday they will put their time in Sunday fitting up their plows and tools for an early start Monday morning. This is not right; it is a sin, for the command is to remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. So when we fail to attend church, Sunday school, and other religious gatherings, we are not doing our duty. The text does not say to lay aside some of these weights, but it says to lay aside every weight.

“And the sin that doth so easily beset us.”

Now, reader, as I believe that all men have that I have asked this question of a great many church members: What their besetting sin was? Some would say, “My worst sin is my temper; somehow I just can’t control my temper.” Well, this is very hard for some men to do though, I say it is possible for any man, and the day will come when his temper will be controlled for him, though it will be too late for him. Another says, “My greatest trouble is that I am taking too much after the good things of this life and it seems like I can’t help it. This is my besetting sin. To this I say

you must lay it aside. If we let anything get between us and our God who created us we will never reach the Promised Land.

Now, reader, as I believe that all men have sin that so easily besets them, I will tell you what my besetting sin was in my early Christian life. It was the sin of prejudice, and I will tell you just what it did for me soon after I joined the church. I was licensed to exhort, and I was living in Bell County where it was very thickly settled. In that community there were Baptists, Methodists, and quite a number of Christian Church people, so I soon found that there was a great dispute among those denominations and, I being a young licensed man in the Methodist church, I engaged in the battle, thinking that it was my duty to defend Methodism above everything else. We had only one school house that all denominations worshipped in. I was running a Sunday School in the house on the day for the Christian preacher to hold his service. When the school was over, I turned the service over to the Christian preacher, and he got up on the rostrum and said, "Now if I cross anyone's lives in this talk today you are at liberty to get right up and call me on it, as it will not bother me a bit." While delivering his discourse he said that the Methodists were preaching from a scripture that was in the discipline and not in the Bible. I was sitting near by him, I just opened my testament and laid it on the table and sat down. He picked the book up and read it out to the congregation, and said, "I know it is there brother, but I don't believe it." He had not

noticed that he had a testament, but thought it was the discipline, so when he got through his discourse he asked me if I had a word to say, so I took the stand and picked up the book and told the people that it was a testament just like the one he had just preached from, and added a few words and sat down. The Christian preacher got up and said that he was glad brother Cross had thus defended his church, said he was raised by Methodist parents, so his church all fell out with him because he did not try to get up a controversy with me. Just after this occurred I moved some ten miles away from there. I had not lived on my new place long before old Brother Rann came from the same settlement and settled right by me. He was a good old Methodist brother. One day he said to me, "Brother Cross you have broken up the Christian church over there on Nolan. They haven't preached a sermon there since you got in after them the day that that brother misquoted the Methodist people. So I began to think that if I would turn in now on the Baptist people and tear them up that the Methodist conference would soon ordain me and I would be the biggest thing in the business. So in a few days our protracted meeting came on and I was on hand. To my great surprise, I was there two days and the preacher had never called on Brother Cross for a word of any kind, and I could see there were some there that were enjoying the comforting influence of the Holy Spirit and I felt worse than I ever did in all my life. I got off to myself in secret prayer and, after an earnest appeal to God, I received a mes-

sage from above which taught me that I was driving my own soul into eternal darkness, so just here I promised my Savior that the sin of prejudice never should lead me astray again. I do believe that the sin of prejudice is driving more men's souls to torment than any other. Now let us lay aside every weight of sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run the race with patience.

Now reader let us study a little about the great importance of having patience in all things. The Scripture says to let patience have its perfect work, and here we find that patience is the only thing that will lead to perfection, but some one will say; there is no such thing as perfection in this life. Very well, I am not discussing that subject just now, but will say that there was a perfect man on earth besides our Saviour and it was patience that made him perfect. Our Lord said to the devil, "Have you considered my servant, Jobe, a perfect man?" Now reader listen, if a man never strives to do anything and has no patience he is a failure. For instance: Let a man take charge of a Sunday school and some of the people begin to drop out, and his class goes down to just a few members. He will get discouraged and will finally turn the school loose and quit. Now this is for the lack of patience. I have seen men, when they were put in charge of a Sunday school, that would hold their school for a month at a time with only three or four scholars in the class who would talk and advise with those few children just like they had a large class. After a long time others would begin to drop in, and finally they would have a large

and prosperous class in school. These men had patience and so it is that without patience, we can do nothing. Then dear reader, let us, like old Job, wait with patience for the promise of God. We do not have to suffer the afflictions that Job did, but we must bear the light afflictions that come to us in this life, which does not require as much patience as did the case of Job. Now dear reader, brethren of all denominations, "let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." This is my earnest prayer. Now in conclusion, let me say to you dear sinner friends, if you should read this lesson, that the same admonition given to the church members is applicable to you also. You were at one time in your life, a child of the Living God and had you passed out of this life in childhood you would have gone to the Gloryland, but you have alienated—gone away from the God who created you and the Christ who redeemed you—and stand now as alien sinners before God. There is a time in the life of every soul that is born into this world when he has his choice as to whom he will serve, and I thank God that all sinners still have that choice, then I would ask you, as one that loves you, to make the wise choice now before it is too late. You may ask, "How can I make that choice?" Now if you will hear me, I will tell you and, to make it short, I will ask you to read Ezekiel 18:27, as follows: "Again when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right he shall save his soul alive."



Now reader you see that there are just two sides to the religion of Jesus Christ, one is the right, the other is the wrong. You can't do that which is lawful and right without making a full surrender of your heart and life to the God who created and the Christ who redeemed you.

And now, to the young men of the country, I earnestly appeal to you and ask you to decide to-day that you will turn away from everything of a sinful nature, and do that which is lawful and right, And when you enter into that kind of a life one, have all confidence in God. He will help you over all the rough places in this life, for He has said, "I am with you even unto the end of the world." Then add to your faith virtue, knowledge, temperance and Godliness. All these Christian graces will lift you on higher planes of Christianity. I am speaking to the young men—you are the hope of our country; some day you will have to fill the place of the older servants of our God. Now I must close this subject and take up something else, but let me say to you, if you are unsaved and will endeavor to engage in the Christian life you can rest in the assurance that you have the earnest prayers of the writer of these lines.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and for instruction in righteousness." II. Timothy, 3:16.

Now reader, I will try to show you what the Doctrine of Jesus Christ is. It is said that He is the great physician and so He is, and, just as the

medical doctor comes to a sick man now days, so Christ came to a sick family when He came to this world, and, just like the medical man, He has had a true prescription written and it is in reach of all men, though some one will ask, "What is the remedy for sin." The antidote is faith in Jesus Christ. When you get such faith in Christ as to be willing to accept Him as your personal Saviour, then the next step is repentance, and, when you have got faith and repentance in the full sense of the word, you are then right where God will take hold of you and baptize you with the Holy Spirit. Then you are in a saved state—but you must not stop here. You see the medicine man, when he has got his patient out of danger, tells the nurse just what sort of food and tonic to give the man until he gets in perfect health again. So it is with the soul that Christ redeemed from sin. When a man has received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, He discharges the sin cured patient, though He gives him all the instructions as to food and tonic. He tells him to feast on the bread of life, and he must take the tonic of obedience all the way through life, so, when he gets to the end, he will be a perfect man in Jesus Christ.

Now reader you have gotten everything in this short lesson that is worthy to be called doctrine—faith, repentance, spiritual baptism and then obedience. If this does not cover all of the duty of man, I am willing to say that I know nothing of the teachings of the Bible. The word obedience covers the whole catalogue of our duty to God. Spiritual baptism is not an act of men, but it is the gift of God.

I believe that every denomination of Christians has a right to form such church government as suits them, and if we want to call it doctrine, that is all right; though it is not right to preach that kind of stuff to sinners and call it the doctrine of Jesus Christ. There are men all over the country who are preaching more of their church doctrine to the people than the true doctrine that Christ taught to men, while He was on earth, to show them how they might reach eternal life.

Now dear reader, if there is anything I hate to hear, or to hear of, it is a denominational debate—two preachers discussing their church. I do not think Christian people ought to go to such a place. I get a thought from the Psalms that keeps me away from all such places. David said, “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners.” Such scripture as this should keep all good people away from such places, for all they hear is the counsel of ungodly men. As a general thing, those debating men are talented men and they use every Scripture they can think of to prove that their church is the only church. Then why is it wrong for Christian men to attend those debates? Here is why we should not tolerate them: There are always some unsaved young people there, and they will look on these old Christian men and women who have been church members for years, and the young people will say—and have a right to say—that if these old members are yet undecided as to their salvation and are here trying to get right,

there is no use for me to even try to make a start, and so it is that the unsaved of our country are being driven into infidelity. Thus it behooves every Christian man or woman to abstain from such debating as this. I thank God that I, though seventy-nine years three months and two days old today, have never been guilty of attending one of those uncalled for debates.

So I would ask you to read the Good Book—take it for the great counselor—it will always lead you right, telling you just what you ought to do. Everything that God requires of man is “to search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.” When you are reading the Good Book you are getting the words of Eternal Truth, and not the words of men whose ideas are no better than your own, for you get your idea from the inspired words of our God.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.”  
Psalms 1:1.

Now kind reader, what has a man got to do to be called blessed in the sight of God? He is a man or woman that is always trying to live a Christian life, to walk in a righteous channel, that is, to do the will of our Father who is in Heaven. Thus he is a shining light to all who see his Godly walk. To live that kind of life you must keep out of the counsel of the ungodly man and, while you are doing this, you are neither standing in the way of the sinner nor sitting in the seat of the scornful.

The thought we get in this lesson is to keep out of the counsel of the ungodly and, to do this, we should know who is an ungodly man. There is a difference between a common sinner and an ungodly man, yet they will all stand together on the same platform at the Judgment. The ordinary sinner is the man who, when he reaches the age of accountability to God, turns a deaf ear to all parental advice and good instructions, and drifts out in life having no knowledge of God or of eternity. This constitutes the common sinner, but the ungodly man is he who, at some time in life, has had some spiritual knowledge of God, and some of them claim that they have accepted Christ as their personal Saviour and join some church. He may think he will try to live a Christian, and just here the devil holds out to him the golden sceptre, when for the lack of courage and manhood to go on in discharge of his duty, he will reach out and take hold of the devil's golden sceptre, then he falls out with the people of God and is ready to throw any stumbling block he can before the young Christian boy or girl. If there is any kind of an entertainment in the community, and the church members want to go, they will consult with the man who they know is going to that place, knowing he will say it is alright. But David says, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly."

Then what is said of the man who does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly? He is said to be one whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law meditates day and night. He is also said

to be like a tree planted by the river of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season. Also it is said that his leaf shall not wither and whatsoever he doeth it shall prosper. The leaf on that tree represents the life and influence of a good Christian man. His leaf will never wither. The influence of a good man never withers, it will last from generation to generation. I remember a good old local preacher who was one of the first settlers in Comanche County, his name was Mance Coker. I have heard him preach a great many sermons. That good old brother was a Godly man and has gone to his reward long ago, and though there is the third generation now to follow him, some of whom are in Comanche County, and some in other parts of the State of Texas, as far as my knowledge extends they are most all Christian people. Why is it so many of them are Christians today? It is because they always walked in the counsel of a Godly father. No wonder that David said, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly." We have seen the influence of a Christian man, but let us look at the other side of this thing just a little. "The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away, therefore, the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous, for the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish." Now dear reader if you will heed the admonition of this short lesson it will keep you always in a righteous channel. I will here close this subject, assuring you that you have my earnest prayers.



“Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life and they are they which testify of me.” St. John 5:39.

The text quoted is the last one I will call your attention to in this connection and to show the great importance of it I will tell you my own experience from the time I made a profession of religion, which was forty-eight years ago, up to the present day. I joined the Methodist church and started in to try to live a devoted life, but in a very short time the tempter came to me just like he comes to all young Christians. I began to see it was a difficult matter for me to keep in a righteous channel. Right here I made a great mistake. I would go to hear every talented preacher thinking I might hear something that would get me right again. I had lost out in a spiritual sense. I would go to hear every denomination preach and one would preach one thing and another would preach something else, so I got to where I almost thought Christianity was a failure. I did not have sense enough to know that those men were preaching churchanity instead of Christianity, still I had such confidence in God and such faith in Jesus Christ that I could not give up the effort of trying to get my heart right with God, so began to read the Bible, and directly I came on to the subject of this last lesson. “Search the Scriptures for in them ye have eternal life and they are they which testify of me.” So I read further in the Good Book, and would always pray to God, asking Him to lead me in my studies. In reading the Prophet Ezekiel,

chapter 8, and 27th verse, where “the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he committeth and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive,” I found a lesson to me. I had already given up my desire for sin of any kind and then to do that which was lawful and right was my great desire. It is still my object, and will be as long as I live, to do the right thing if I know it. This is the greatest thing that man can do in the religion of our blessed Saviour. When a man is doing all together right he can’t be wrong, so we see that in doing what is lawful and right we are doing what the God that created us, wanted us to do. But to keep right in the sight of God we must know what is lawful in His sight before we act upon it, and this draws us to the subject of this lesson. Search the Scriptures, then we will know just how to act. The act of obedience covers the whole catalogue of our duty to God. To obey all the commandments in the Bible is to do everything that Christ says we should do, and abstain from everything that He says thou shalt not do. So we see that we must keep every command in the Bible. The ten commandments are not all that Christ says we shall keep. You remember he says, “A new commandment give I unto you, that you love one another and right here is where a great many make a wonderful mistake. Sometimes we think our neighbors have mistreated us in some way and instead of going to that neighbor in a friendly, loving manner and talking the trouble over with him, which would nine times out of ten settle the whole trouble, we go around and

talk to another neighbor about him. This is all wrong and contrary to the commands of Jesus Christ. I can hardly find a stopping place in writing along this line. Talking about your neighbor, brother, in a vicious way, causes more unhappy people and checks the progress of the Christian religion in a community more than any other sin that man can be guilty of. Reader, you remember the Lord told his disciples how to pray and what to say, and in the prayer was a sentence like this: "Forgive us of our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. I have heard men say they could not pray such a prayer; that it would not be answered, but I say He will answer that prayer for any man, though He will forgive you your trespasses just like you forgive.













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